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MR. FIDDLONG as JANE SHORE.  
But now his wife and those who  
hig's'd ne, now curse me to my face.  
Act V. Scene 1.  
Printed for C. Cooke,  
David Wey,  
Engraved by Chapman.

THE

BRITISH DRAMA,

A COLLECTION OF THE MOST

ESTEEMED DRAMATIC PRODUCTIONS,

WITH

Biography

OF THE RESPECTIVE AUTHORS;

AND

CRITIQUE ON EACH PLAY,

BY

R. CUMBERLAND, Esq.

IN FOURTEEN VOLUMES.

VOL I.

CONTAINING

JANE SHORE,  
CATO,  
ISSABELLA,  
GEORGE BARNWELL.

153040  
28/10/19

LONDON;

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TRAGEDY  
OF  
JANE SHORE.

BY NICHOLAS ROWE, ESQ.

ADAPTED FOR THEATRICAL REPRESENTATION,  
*As performed at the Theatres-Royal,*  
COVENT-GARDEN AND DRURY-LANE.

Regulated from the Prompt Books,

BY PERMISSION OF THE MANAGERS.

WITH A CRITIQUE,

*By R. CUMBERLAND, Esq.*

The Lines distinguished by inverted Commas are omitted  
in the Representation.

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Cooke's Edition.

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SUPERBLY EMBELLISHED.

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London :

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United Kingdom.





TO HIS GRACE THE DUKE OF  
*QUEENSBERRY AND DOVER,*  
MARQUIS OF BEVERLEY, &c.

MY LORD,

I HAVE long lain under the greatest obligation to your Grace's family, and nothing has been more in my wishes, than that I might be able to discharge some part at least of so large a debt. But your noble birth and fortune, the power and goodness of your numerous friends, have placed you in such an independency, that the services I am able to render to your Grace can never be advantageous, I am sure not necessary, to you. However, the next piece of gratitude, and the only one I am capable of, is the acknowledgment of what I owe: and as this is the most public, and indeed the only way I have of doing it, your Grace will pardon me if I take this opportunity to let the world know the duty and esteem I had for your illustrious father. It is, I must confess, a very tender point to touch upon; and, at the first sight, may seem an ill-chosen compliment, to renew the memory of such a loss, especially to a disposition so sweet and gentle, and to a heart so sensible of filial piety, as your Grace's has

been from your earliest childhood. But perhaps this is one of those griefs by which the heart may be made better; and if the remembrance of his death bring heaviness along with it, the honour that is paid to his memory by all good men, shall wipe away those tears; and the example of his life, set before your eyes, shall be of the greatest advantage to your Grace, in the conduct and future disposition of your own.

In a character so amiable, as that of the Duke of Queensberry was, there can be no part so proper to begin with, as that which was in him, and is in all good men, the foundation of all other virtues, either religious or civil,—I mean good-nature: good-nature, which is friendship between man and man, good-breeding in courts, charity in religion, and the true spring of all beneficence in general. This was a quality he possessed in as great a measure as any nobleman I ever had the honour to know. It was this natural sweetness of temper, which made him the best man in the world to live with, in any kind of relation. It was this made him a good master to his servants, a good friend to his friends, and the tenderest father to his children. For the last I can have no better voucher than your Grace; and for the rest, I may appeal to all that have had the honour to know him. There was a spirit and pleasure in his conversation, which always enlivened the company he was in; which, with a certain easiness and frankness in his disposition, that did not at all derogate from the dignity of his birth and character, rendered him infinitely agreeable: and as no man had a more delicate taste



of intellectual enjoyment, or of natural wit and vivacity, his conversation always abounded in good humour and instruction.

For those parts of his character which relate to his political capacity, they will be best known by the great employments he passed through; all which he discharged worthily to himself, justly to the princes who employed him, and advantageously to his country. There is no occasion to enumerate his several employments, as secretary of state, for Scotland in particular, for Britain in general, or lord high commissioner of Scotland; which last office he bore more than once; but at no time more honourably, and (as I hope) more happily both for the present age and for posterity, than when he laid the foundation for the British Union. The constancy and address which he manifested on that occasion, are still fresh in every body's memory; and perhaps when our children shall reap those benefits from that work, which some people do not foresee and hope for now, they may remember the Duke of Queensberry with that gratitude which such a service done to his country deserves.

He shewed, upon all occasions, a strict attachment to the crown, in the legal service of which no man could exert himself more dutifully, or more strenuously; and at the same time, no man gave more bold and generous evidence of the love he bore to his country. Of the latter there can be no better proof, than the share he had in the late happy Revolution; nor of the former, than that dutiful respect, and un-

shaken fidelity, which he preserved for her present majesty, even to his last moments.

With so many good and great qualities, it is not strange that he possessed so great a share in the esteem of the queen and her immediate predecessor; nor that those great princes should repose the highest confidence in him: what a pattern has he left behind him for the nobility in general, and for your Grace in particular, to copy after!

Your Grace will forgive me, if my zeal for your welfare and honour (which not any body has more at heart than myself) shall press you with some more than ordinary warmth to the imitation of your noble father's virtues. You have, my lord, many great advantages, which may encourage you to go on in pursuit of this reputation: it has pleased God to give you naturally that sweetness of temper, which, as I before hinted, is the foundation of all good inclinations. You have the honour to be born, not only of the greatest, but of the best of parents: of a nobleman generally beloved, and generally lamented; and of a lady adorned with all the virtues that enter into the character of a good wife, an admirable friend, and a most indulgent mother. The natural advantages of your mind have been cultivated by the most proper rules of education. You have the care of many noble friends, and especially of an excellent uncle, to watch over you in the tenderness of your youth. You set out amongst the first of mankind, and I doubt not but your virtues will be equal to the dignity of your rank.

That I may live to see your Grace eminent for the love of your country, for your service and duty to your prince, and, in convenient time, adorned with all the honours that have ever been conferred upon your noble family ; that you may be distinguished to posterity, as the bravest, greatest, and best man of the age you live in, is the hearty wish and prayer of,

My Lord,

Your Grace's most obedient, and

Most faithful, humble servant,

N. ROWE.





# CRITIQUE

ON

## *JANE SHORE.*

THE duty that obliges me to do what I have so often done by choice, cannot be complained of, unless indeed it had compelled me to lower my admiration of this beautiful composition.

It is possible that a man who has tuned his ear to the brilliant inequalities and unexpected bursts of Shakspeare's tragedy, may to a certain degree languish over this of Rowe. The native of a mountainous region, who has familiarized himself to the bold scenery of crags and cataracts, may have imbibed a taste that cannot harmonize with the tamer beauties of the level vale: its smoothly-gliding rivers will not animate him, whose passion has kept pace with torrents; and the rich display of cultivated fertility may have no charms for the spectator, whose horizon has been ever bounded by savage desarts and high-towering rocks. We must therefore forgive the

admirer of Shakspeare, if he can see no likeness of his favourite poet in this sketch ; where, if Rowe had caught any traces of that sublime original, as he conceived he had, it would at most have been but a copy in miniature. In fact, there is no more real similitude between this elegant drama and any one of the magnificent tragedies of Shakspeare, than there is between the ballad of Tweed-side, and the Coronation anthem of Handel.

Versification, wrought up to its highest polish, is the most prominent recommendation of *Jane Shore*. The English stage does not possess a finer sample of harmonious level writing. The plot is well-chosen, but it is not always well-managed. The inviolable friendship that Alicia pledges to Jane Shore, is changed at once into rancorous hatred; yet if the poet meant to make her sincere in her first profession, (which it clearly appears that he did) nothing passes in the play to create that violent change, inasmuch as she is described to have been to the full as jealous of Lord Hastings before her first interview with him, as after it. In the mean time, it is a trick beneath the dignity of tragedy, and too infamous, too ridiculous, for a character of Alicia's cast, to change Jane Shore's petition, by a slight-of-hand manœuvre barely passable in a comedy, and make Shore give the Duke of Gloster the petition which she (Alicia) had drawn up, and which the Duke ought to have been sure was an imposition upon the petitioner, and of course not worthy of his serious attention; yet he

does pay attention to it, and his remark upon it is—

“Should she presume to prate of such high matters,

“The meddling harlot, dear should she abide it.”

The Lord Hastings is described, or rather describes himself, as a patriot, who

“Would die with pleasure for his country’s good.”

But when this great virtue made so striking a part of this self-applauding hero’s character, it is a pity that his patriotism is shaded with such despicable properties as certainly ought not to be found in company with it. For can any instance be given of a more debased, ungrateful, mean, and cowardly action, than his conduct exhibits towards the generous Dumont, from whom he had received his life, after forfeiting it by a behaviour characteristic only of a bully and assassin? What can be more profligate and rascally than his attack upon Jane Shore, in the moment when she had thrown herself at his feet, and was pouring forth her acknowledgments for the protection he had shewn her through his interest with the Duke of Gloster? He must be a very ingenious poet who could invent a more effectual way of blackening the human character than by an action of this sort. Neither can the language that this noble patriot holds towards Alicia, (so favoured as he has been by her) be considered as the language of a gentleman: it is unmanly, gross, and cruel.

How Alicia came to leave him in possession of

her apartment, after she had declared that she would

“ See his last breath with indignation go,  
“ And tread him sinking to the shades below.”

is not to be naturally accounted for: neither is there any reason given why Jane Shore, whom the author had dismissed to her repose long before, walks into the room as soon as Alicia had walked out of it, when the audience supposes her to have been in her first sleep. All this might have been taken care of; and no author, who had a regard for probabilities, ought to have neglected it. Let me add also, that the force which Lord Hastings attempts to put upon her in the common receiving-room of Alicia's house, open to the whole family, and to her in particular, is glaringly inartificial.

In the mean time the writing very rarely declines; and in the scene between Gloster and Jane Shore, as likewise in that between Hastings and Alicia, it is excellent. The character of the Protector is admirably well supported through every scene he is concerned in; and if the poet had given us an interview between him and Alicia, after the execution of Lord Hastings, there is no doubt but he would have made it a fine and striking feature in his composition. Indeed, it seems, in my humble judgment, so obvious, that I wonder he neglected it: for in the doing of this, he might have saved her character in a considerable degree, by making her avow herself to Gloster as the author of the peti-



tion which she imposed on Jane Shore; and had she then, in addition to her execrations for the murder of Hastings, urged upon him her reproaches for his inhumanity to the penitent and expiring heroine of the play, it would not only have been some off-set to her mad brutality towards the poor object whom by her artifice and unfounded jealousy she had destroyed, but have given a grand auxiliary interest and splendour to a catastrophe, which, as it is, though simple and affecting, is meagre, languid, and palpably but little calculated for stage-effect.

•• For the Life of Nicholas Rowe, the author of this play, see the *Fair Penitent*.





## PROLOGUE.

*TO-NIGHT, if you have brought your good old taste,  
We'll treat you with a downright English feast :  
A tale, which told long since in homely wise,  
Hath never fail'd of melting gentle eyes.  
Let no nice sir despise our hapless dame,  
Because recording ballads chaunt her name ;  
Those venerable ancient song-enditers  
Soar'd many a pitch above our modern writers :  
They caterwaul'd in no romantic ditty,  
Sighing for Phillis's, or Chloe's pity.  
Justly they drew the fair, and spoke her plain,  
And sung her by her christian name—'twas Jane.  
Our numbers may be more refin'd than those,  
But what we've gain'd in verse, we've lost in prose.  
Their words no shuffling, double-meaning knew,  
Their speech was homely, but their hearts were true.  
In such an age, immortal Shakspeare wrote,  
By no quaint rules, nor hampering critics taught ;  
With rough majestic force he mov'd the heart,  
And strength and nature made amends for art.  
Our humble author does his steps pursue,  
He owns he had the mighty bard in view ;  
And in these scenes has made it more his care,  
To rouse the passions, than to charm the ear.  
Yet for those gentle beaux, who love the chime,  
The ends of acts still jingle into rhyme.  
The ladies too, he hopes, will not complain,  
Here are some subjects for a softer strain,  
A nymph forsaken, and a perjur'd swain.  
What most he fears, is, lest the dames should frown,  
The dames of wit and pleasure about town,  
To see our picture drawn unlike their own.  
But lest that error should provoke to fury  
The hospitable hundreds of old Drury,  
He bid me say, in our Jane Shore's defence,  
She dol'd about the charitable pence,  
Built hospitals, turn'd saint, and dy'd long since.*

*For her example, whatsoe'er we make it,  
 They have their choice to let alone or take it.  
 Tho' few, as I conceive, will think it meet,  
 To weep so sorely for a sin so sweet:  
 Or mourn and mortify the pleasant sense,  
 To rise in tragedy two ages hence.*



## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

### *Men.*

Duke of GLOSTER.  
 Lord HASTINGS.  
 CATESBY.  
 Sir RICHARD RATCLIFFE.  
 BELMOUR.  
 DUMONT.  
 DERBY.  
 Servant.

### *Women.*

ALICIA.  
 JANE SHORE.

*Several Lords of the Council, Guards, and  
 Attendants.*

*Scene, LONDON.*



## JANE SHORE.

### ACT I. SCENE I.

*The Tower. Enter the Duke of GLOSTER, Sir RICHARD RATCLIFFE, and CATESBY.*

*Gloster.* Thus far success attends upon our councils,  
And each event has answer'd to my wish;  
The queen and all her upstart race are quell'd;  
Dorset is banish'd, and her brother Rivers,  
Ere this, lies shorter by the head at Pomfret.  
The nobles have, with joint concurrence, nam'd me  
Protector of the realm. My brother's children,  
Young Edward and the little York, are lodg'd  
Here, safe within the Tower. How say you, sirs,  
Does not this business wear a lucky face?  
The sceptre and the golden wreath of royalty  
Seem hung within my reach.

*Rat.* Then take 'em to you,  
And wear 'em long and worthily. You are  
The last remaining male of princely York,  
(For Edward's boys, the state esteems not of them)  
And therefore on your sov'reignty and rule,  
The common-weal does her dependance make,  
And leans upon your highness' able hand.

*Cat.* And yet to-morrow does the council meet,  
To fix a day for Edward's coronation.  
Who can expound this riddle?

*Glost.* That can I.  
Those lords are each one my approv'd good friends,  
Of special trust and nearness to my bosom;  
And howsoever busy they may seem,

And diligent to bustle in the state,  
Their zeal goes on no farther than we lead,  
And at our bidding stays.

*Cat.* Yet there is one,  
And he amongst the foremost in his power,  
Of whom I wish your highness were assur'd.  
For me, perhaps it is my nature's fault,  
I own, I doubt of his inclining, much.

*Glost.* I guess the man at whom your words would  
Hastings—— [point :

*Cat.* The same.

*Glost.* He bears me great good will.

*Cat.* 'Tis true, to you, as to the lord protector,  
And Gloster's duke, he bows with lowly service :  
But were he bid to cry, *God save king Richard !*  
Then tell me in what terms he would reply ?  
Believe me, I have prov'd the man, and found him :  
I know he bears a most religious reverence  
To his dead master Edward's royal memory,  
And whither that may lead him is most plain.  
Yet more—One of that stubborn sort he is,  
Who, if they once grow fond of an opinion,  
They call it honour, honesty, and faith,  
And sooner part with life than let it go.

*Glost.* And yet this tough impracticable heart,  
Is govern'd by a dainty-finger'd girl ;  
Such flaws are found in the most worthy natures ;  
A laughing, toying, wheedling, whimpering she  
Shall make him amble on a gossip's message,  
And take the distaff with a hand as patient  
As e'er did Hercules.

*Rat.* The fair Alicia,  
Of noble birth, and exquisite of feature,  
Has held him long a vassal to her beauty.

*Cat.* I fear, he fails in his allegiance there ;  
Or my intelligence is false, or else  
The dame has been too lavish of her feast,  
And fed him till he loathes.

*Glost.* No more, he comes,

*Enter Lord HASTINGS.*

*Hast.* Health, and the happiness of many days,  
Attend upon your grace.

*Glost.* My good lord chamberlain,  
We're much beholden to your gentle friendship.

*Hast.* My lord, I come an humble suitor to you.

*Glost.* In right good time. Speak out your pleasure freely.

*Hast.* I am to move your highness in behalf  
Of Shore's unhappy wife.

*Glost.* Say you, of Shore? [high:

*Hast.* Once a bright star, that held her place on  
The first and fairest of our English dames,  
While royal Edward held the sov'reign rule.  
Now sunk in grief, and pining with despair,  
Her waning form no longer shall incite  
Envy in woman, or desire in man.

She never sees the sun, but thro' her tears.

And wakes to sigh the live-long night away.

*Glost.* Marry! the times are badly chang'd with her,  
From Edward's days to these. Then all was jollity,  
Feasting and mirth, light wantonness and laughter,  
Piping and playing, minstrelsy and masquing;  
'Till life fled from us like an idle dream,  
A shew of mummary without a meaning.  
My brother (rest and pardon to his soul!)  
Is gone to his account; for this his minion,  
The revel rout is done—But you were speaking  
Concerning her—I have been told, that you  
Are frequent in your visitation to her.

*Hast.* No farther, my good lord, than friendly pity,  
And tender-hearted charity allow.

*Glost.* Go to; I did not mean to chide you for it.  
For, sooth to say, I hold it noble in you  
To cherish the distress'd—On with your tale.

*Hast.* Thus it is, gracious sir, that certain officers  
Using the warrant of your mighty name,  
With insolence unjust, and lawless power,

Have seiz'd upon the lands which late she held  
By grant, from her great master Edward's bounty.

*Glost.* Somewhat of this, but slightly, have I heard;  
And tho' some counsellors of forward zeal,  
Some of most ceremonious sanctity,  
And bearded wisdom, often have provok'd  
The hand of justice to fall heavy on her;  
Yet still, in kind compassion of her weakness,  
And tender memory of Edward's love,  
I have withheld the merciless stern law  
From doing outrage on her helpless beauty. [*mercy,*

*Hast.* Good Heav'n, who renders mercy back for  
With open-handed bounty shall repay you :  
This gentle deed shall fairly be set foremost,  
To screen the wild escapes of lawless passion,  
And the long train of frailties flesh is heir to.

*Glost.* Thus far the voice of pity pleaded only :  
Our farther and more full extent of grace  
Is given to your request. Let her attend,  
And to ourself deliver up her griefs.  
She shall be heard with patience, and each wrong  
At full redress'd. But I have other news,  
Which much import us both ; for still my fortunes  
Go hand in hand with yours : our common foes,  
The queen's relations, our new-fangled gentry,  
Have fall'n their haughty crests—That for your privacy.  
[*Exeunt.*

## SCENE II.

*An Apartment in JANE SHORE's House. Enter  
BELMOUR and DUMONT.*

*Bel.* How she has liv'd you have heard my tale al-  
The rest your own attendance in her family, [*ready,*  
Where I have found the means this day to place you,  
And nearer observation, best will tell you.  
See, with what sad and sober cheer she comes.

*Enter JANE SHORE.*

Sure, or I read her visage much amiss,  
Or grief besets her hard. Save you, fair lady,

The blessings of the cheerful morn be on you,  
And greet your beauty with its opening sweets.

*J. Sh.* My gentle neighbour, your good wishes still  
Pursue my hapless fortunes! Ah, good Belmour!  
How few, like thee, inquire the wretched out,  
And court the offices of soft humanity?  
Like thee reserve their raiment for the naked,  
Reach out their bread to feed the crying orphan,  
Or mix their pitying tears with those that weep?  
Thy praise deserves a better tongue than mine,  
To speak and bless thy name. "Is this the gentleman,  
Whose friendly service you commended to me?"

*Bel.* Madam, it is.

*J. Sh.* A venerable aspect.

[*Aside.*

Age sits with decent grace upon his visage,  
And worthily becomes his silver locks;  
He wears the marks of many years well spent,  
Of virtue, truth well try'd, and wise experience;  
A friend like this would suit my sorrows well.  
Fortune, I fear me, sir, has meant you ill, [*To Dum.*  
Who pays your merit with that scanty pittance,  
Which my poor hand and humble roof can give.  
But to supply these golden vantages,  
Which elsewhere you might find, expect to meet  
A just regard and value for your worth,  
The welcome of a friend, and the free partnership  
Of all that little good the world allows me.

*Dum.* You over-rate me much; and all my answer  
Must be my future truth; let them speak for me,  
And make up my deserving.

*J. Sh.* Are you of England?

*Dum.* No, gracious lady, Flanders claims my birth;  
At Antwerp has my constant biding been,  
Where sometimes I have known more plenteous days  
Than these which now my failing age affords.

*J. Sh.* Alas! at Antwerp!—Oh, forgive my tears!  
[*Weeping.*

They fall for my offences—and must fall  
Long, long ere they shall wash my stains away.



You knew perhaps—Oh grief! oh shame!—my husband. [guish:

*Dum.* I knew him well—but stay this flood of an-  
The senseless grave feels not your pious sorrows.  
Three years and more are past, since I was bid,  
With many of our common friends to wait him  
To his last peaceful mansion. I attended,  
Sprinkled his clay-cold corse with holy drops,  
According to our church's rev'rend rite,  
And saw him laid in hallow'd ground, to rest.

*J. Sh.* Oh, that my soul had known no joy but him!  
That I had liv'd within his guiltless arms,  
And dying slept in innocence beside him!  
But now his dust abhors the fellowship,  
And scorns to mix with mine.

*Enter a Servant.*

*Ser.* The lady Alicia  
Attends your leisure.

*J. Sh.* Say I wish to see her. [Exit Servant.  
Please, gentle sir, one moment to retire,  
I'll wait you on the instant, and inform you,  
Of each unhappy circumstance, in which  
Your friendly aid and counsel much may stead me,

[Exeunt Belmour and Dumont.

*Enter ALICIA.*

*Alic.* Still, my fair friend, still shall I find you  
Still shall these sighs heave after one another, [thus?  
These trickling drops chase one another still,  
As if the posting messengers of grief  
Could overtake the hours fled far away,  
And make old Time come back?

*J. Sh.* No, my Alicia,  
Heaven and his saints be witness to my thoughts,  
There is no hour of all my life o'er-past,  
That I could wish to take its turn again. [known,

*Alic.* And yet some of those days my friend has  
Some of those years might pass for golden ones,  
At least if woman-kind can judge of happiness.  
What could we wish, we who delight in empire,



Whose beauty is our sov'reign good, and gives us  
Our reasons to rebel, and pow'r to reign,  
What could we more than to behold a monarch,  
Lovely, renown'd, a conqueror, and young,  
Bound in our chains, and sighing at our feet?

*J. Sh.* 'Tis true, the royal Edward was a wonder,  
The goodly pride of all our English youth;  
He was the very joy of all that saw him,  
Form'd to delight, to love, and to persuade.

“ Impassive spirits and angelic natures

“ Might have been charm'd, like yielding human  
“ weakness, [talking.”

“ Stoop'd from their Heav'n, and listen'd to his  
But what had I to do with kings and courts?

My humble lot had cast me far beneath him;

And that he was the first of all mankind,

The bravest and most lovely, was my curse.

*Alic.* Sure, something more than fortune join'd  
your loves;

Nor could his greatness, and his gracious form,  
Be elsewhere match'd so well, as to the sweetness  
And beauty of my friend.

*J. Sh.* Name him no more:

He was the bane and ruin of my peace.

This anguish and these tears, these are the legacies

His fatal love has left me. Thou wilt see me,

Believe me, my Alicia, thou wilt see me,

E'er yet a few short days pass o'er my head,

Abandon'd to the very utmost wretchedness.

The hand of pow'r has seiz'd almost the whole

Of what was left for needy life's support;

Shortly thou wilt behold me poor, and kneeling

Before thy charitable door for bread.

*Alic.* Joy of my life, my dearest Shore, forbear

To wound my heart with thy foreboding sorrows;

Raise thy sad soul to better hopes than these,

Lift up thy eyes, and let them shine once more,

Bright as the morning sun above the mist.

Exert thy charms, seek out the stern Protector,

And soothe his savage temper with thy beauty:  
Spite of his deadly, unrelenting nature,  
He shall be mov'd to pity, and redress thee.

*J. Sh.* My form, alas! has long forgot to please;  
The scene of beauty and delight is chang'd;  
No roses bloom upon my fading cheek,  
Nor laughing graces wanton in my eyes;  
But haggard grief, lean-looking sallow care,  
And pining discontent, a rueful train,  
Dwell on my brow, all hideous and forlorn.  
One only shadow of a hope is left me;  
The noble-minded Hastings, of his goodness,  
Has kindly underta'en to be my advocate,  
And move my humble suit to angry Gloster.

*Alic.* Does Hastings undertake to plead your cause?  
But wherefore should he not? Hastings has eyes;  
The gentle lord has a right tender heart,  
Melting and easy, yielding to impression,  
And catching the soft flame from each new beauty;  
But yours shall charm him long.

*J. Sh.* Away, you flatterer!  
Nor charge his gen'rous meaning with a weakness,  
Which his great soul and virtue must disdain.  
Too much of love thy hapless friend has prov'd,  
Too many giddy foolish hours are gone.  
And in fantastic measures danc'd away:  
May the remaining few know only friendship.  
So thou, my dearest, truest, best Alicia,  
Vouchsafe to lodge me in thy gentle heart,  
A partner there; I will give up mankind,  
Forget the transports of increasing passion,  
And all the pangs we feel for its decay.

*Alic.* Live! live and reign for ever in my bosom;  
[Embracing.

Safe and unrivall'd there possess thy own;  
And you, the brightest of the stars above,  
Ye saints that once were women here below,  
Be witness of the truth, the holy friendship,  
Which here to this my other self I vow.

If I not hold her nearer to my soul,  
Than every other joy the world can give;  
Let poverty, deformity, and shame,  
Distraction and despair seize me on earth,  
Let not my faithless ghost have peace hereafter,  
Nor taste the bliss of your celestial fellowship.

*J. Sh.* Yes, thou art true, and only thou art true:  
Therefore these jewels, once the lavish bounty  
Of royal Edward's love, I trust to thee;

[*Giving a casket.*]

Receive this, all that I can call my own,  
And let it rest unknown, and safe with thee:  
That if the state's injustice should oppress me,  
Strip me of all, and turn me out a wanderer,  
My wretchedness may find relief from thee,  
And shelter from the storm.

*Alic.* My all is thine;  
One common hazard shall attend us both,  
And both be fortunate, or both be wretched.  
But let thy fearful doubting heart be still;  
The saints and angels have thee in their charge,  
And all things shall be well. Think not, the good,  
The gentle deeds of mercy thou hast done,  
Shall die forgotten all; "the poor, the pris'ner,  
'The fatherless, the friendless, and the widow,  
'Who daily own the bounty of thy hand,  
'Shall cry to Heav'n and pull a blessing on thee;"  
Ev'n man, the merciless insulter man,  
Man, who rejoices in our sex's weakness,  
Shall pity thee, and with unwonted goodness  
Forget thy failings, and record thy praise.

*J. Sh.* Why should I think that man will do for me,  
What yet he never did for wretches like me?  
Mark by what partial justice we are judg'd;  
Such is the fate unhappy women find,  
And such the curse entail'd upon our kind,  
That man, the lawless libertine, may rove,  
Free and unquestion'd, through the wilds of love;  
While woman, sense and nature's easy fool,  
Poor weak woman swerve from virtue's rule,

If strongly charm'd, she leave the thorny way,  
And in the softer paths of pleasure stray,  
Ruin ensues, reproach and endless shame,  
And one false step entirely damns her fame:  
In vain with tears the loss she may deplore,  
In vain look back on what she was before;  
She sets, like stars that fall, to rise no more. [*Exeunt.*]

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## ACT II. SCENE I.

*Continues. Enter ALICIA, speaking to JANE SHORE as entering.*

*Alicia.* No farther, gentle friend; good angels  
guard you,  
And spread their gracious wings about your slumbers.  
The drowsy night grows on the world, and now  
The busy craftsmen and o'er-labour'd hind  
Forget the travail of the day in sleep:  
Care only wakes, and moping pensiveness;  
With meagre discontented looks they sit,  
And watch the wasting of the midnight taper,  
Such vigils must I keep, so wakes my soul,  
Restless and self-tormented! Oh, false Hastings!  
Thou hast destroy'd my peace. [*Knocking without.*  
What noise is that!  
What visitor is this, who with bold freedom,  
Breaks in upon the peaceful night and rest,  
With such a rude approach?

*Enter a Servant.*

*Serv.* One from the court,  
Lord Hastings (as I think) demands my lady.

*Alic.* Hastings! Be still, my heart, and try to  
meet him

With his own arts: with falsehood—But he comes.  
*Enter Lord HASTINGS, speaks to a Servant as entering.*

*Hast.* Dismiss my train, and wait alone without.  
Alicia here! Unfortunate encounter!  
But be it as it may.

*Alic.* When humbly, thus,

The great descend to visit the afflicted,  
When thus, unmindful of their rest, they come  
To sooth the sorrows of the midnight mourner,  
Comfort comes with them; like the golden sun,  
Dispels the sullen shades with her sweet influence,  
And cheers the melancholy house of care.

*Hast.* 'Tis true, I would not over-rate a courtesy,  
Nor let the coldness of delay hang on it,  
To nip and blast its favour, like a frost;  
But rather chose, at this late hour, to come,  
That your fair friend may know I have prevail'd;  
The lord protector has receiv'd her suit,  
And means to shew her grace.

*Alic.* My friend! my lord.

*Hast.* Yes, lady, yours: none has a right more  
To task my pow'r than you. [ample

*Alic.* I want the words,  
To pay you back a compliment so courtly;  
But my heart guesses at the friendly meaning,  
And wo'not die your debtor.

*Hast.* 'Tis well, madam.  
But I would see your friend.

*Alic.* Oh, thou false lord!  
I would be mistress of my heaving heart,  
Stifle this rising rage, and learn from thee  
To dress my face in easy dull indiff'rence:  
But 'two' not be; my wrongs will tear their way,  
And rush at once upon thee.

*Hast.* Are you wise?  
Have you the use of reason? Do you wake?  
What means this raving, this transporting passion?

*Alic.* Oh, thou cool traitor! thou insulting tyrant!  
Dost thou behold my poor distracted heart,  
Thus rent with agonizing love and rage,  
And ask me what it means? Art thou not false?  
Am I not scorn'd, forsaken, and abandon'd,  
Left, like a common wretch, to shame and infamy,  
Giv'n up to be the sport of villains' tongues,  
Of laughing parasites, and lewd buffoons;

And all because my soul has doated on thee  
With love, with truth and tenderness unutterable?

*Hast.* Are these the proofs of tenderness and love?  
These endless quarrels, discontents, and jealousies,  
These never-ceasing wailings and complainings,  
These furious starts, these whirlwinds of the soul,  
Which every other moment rise to madness?

*Alic.* What proof, alas! have I not giv'n of love?  
What have I not abandon'd to thy arms!  
Have I not set at nought my noble birth,  
A spotless fame, and an unblemish'd race,  
The peace of innocence, and pride of virtue?  
My prodigality has giv'n thee all;  
And now, I've nothing left me to bestow,  
You hate the wretched bankrupt you have made.

*Hast.* Why am I thus pursu'd from place to place,  
Kept in the view, and cross'd at every turn!  
In vain I fly, and, like a hunted deer,  
Scud o'er the lawns, and hasten to the covert;  
Ere I can reach my safety, you o'ertake me  
With the swift malice of some keen reproach,  
And drive the winged shaft deep in my heart.

*Alic.* Hither you fly, and here you seek repose;  
Spite of the poor deceit, your arts are known,  
Your pious, charitable, midnight visits.

*Hast.* If you are wise, and prize your peace of mind,  
Yet take the friendly counsel of my love;  
Believe me true, nor listen to your jealousy.  
Let not that devil, which undoes your sex,  
That cursed curiosity, seduce you  
To hunt for needless secrets, which, neglected,  
Shall never hurt your quiet! but once known,  
Shall sit upon your heart, pinch it with pain,  
And banish the sweet sleep for ever from you.  
Go to—be yet advis'd—

*Alic.* Dost thou in scorn,  
Preach patience to my rage, and bid me tamely  
Sit like a poor contented idiot down, [thee,  
Nor dare to think thou'st wrong'd me? Ruin seize



And swift perdition overtake thy treachery.  
Have I the least remaining cause to doubt?  
Hast thou endeavour'd once to hide thy falsehood?  
To hide it might have spoke some little tenderness,  
And shewn thee half unwilling to undo me:  
But thou disdain'st the weakness of humanity,  
Thy words, and all thy actions have confess'd it;  
Ev'n now thy eyes avow it, now they speak,  
And insolently own the glorious villainy.

*Hast.* Well, then, I own my heart has broke your  
Patient I bore the painful bondage long, [chains.  
At length my gen'rous love disdains your tyranny;  
The bitterness and stings of taunting jealousy,  
Vexatious days, and jarring, joyless nights,  
Hath driv'n him forth to seek some safer shelter,  
Where he may rest his weary wings in peace.

*Alic.* You triumph! do! and with gigantic pride  
Defy impending vengeance. Heav'n shall wink;  
No more his arm shall roll the dreadful thunder,  
Nor send his lightnings forth: no more his justice  
Shall visit the presuming sons of men,  
But perjury, like thine, shall dwell in safety.

*Hast.* Whate'er my fate decrees for me hereafter,  
Be present to me now, my better angel!  
Preserve me from the storm that threatens now,  
And if I have beyond atonement sinn'd,  
Let any other kind of plague o'ertake me,  
So I escape the fury of that tongue. [lord,

*Alic.* Thy pray'r is heard—I go—but know, proud  
Howe'er thou scorn'st the weakness of my sex,  
This feeble hand may find the means to reach thee,  
Howe'er sublime in pow'r and greatness plac'd,  
With royal favour guarded round and grac'd;  
On eagle's wings my rage shall urge her flight;  
And hurl thee headlong from thy topmost height;  
Then, like thy fate, superior will I sit,  
And view thee fall'n and grov'ling at my feet;  
See thy last breath with indignation go,  
And tread thee sinking to the shades below. [*Erit.*

*Hast.* How fierce a fiend is passion! With what wildness,

What tyranny untam'd it reigns in woman!

Unhappy sex! whose easy yielding temper

Gives way to ev'ry appetite alike:

"Each gust of inclination uncontroll'd,

"Sweeps thro' their souls and sets them in an uproar;

"Each motion of the heart rises to fury,"

And love in their weak bosoms is a rage

As terrible as hate, and as destructive.

"So the wind roars o'er the wide fenceless ocean,

"And heaves the billows of the boiling deep,

"Alike from north, from south, from east, from

"west;

"With equal force the tempest blows by turns

"From every corner of the seaman's compass."

But soft ye now—for here comes one, disclaims

Strife and her wrangling train; of equal elements,

Without one jarring atom, was she form'd,

And gentleness and joy make up her being.

*Enter JANE SHORE.*

Forgive me, fair one, if officious friendship

Intrudes on your repose, and comes thus late

To greet you with the tidings of success.

The princely Gloster has vouchsaf'd you hearing,

To-morrow he expects you at the court;

There plead your cause, with never-failing beauty,

Speak all your griefs, and find a full redress.

*J. Sh.* Thus humbly let your lowly servant bend.

[*Kneeling.*

Thus let me bow my grateful knee to earth,

And bless your noble nature for this goodness.

*Hast.* Rise, gentle dame, you wrong my meaning

Think me not guilty of a thought so vain, [much,

To sell my courtesy for thanks like these.

*J. Sh.* 'Tis true, your bounty is beyond my speaking: [you;

But tho' my mouth be dumb, my heart shall thank

And when it melts before the throne of mercy,



Mourning and bleeding for my past offences,  
My fervent soul shall breathe one pray'r for you,  
If pray'rs of such a wretch are heard on high,  
That Heav'n will pay you back when most you need,  
The grace and goodness you have shewn to me.

*Hast.* If there be ought of merit in my service,  
Impute it there, where most 'tis due, to love;  
Be kind, my gentle mistress, to my wishes,  
And satisfy my panting heart with beauty.

*J. Sh.* Alas! my lord——

*Hast.* Why bend thy eyes to earth?  
Wherefore these looks of heaviness and sorrow?  
Why breathes that sigh, my love? And wherefore  
falls

This trickling show'r of tears, to stain thy sweetness?

*J. Sh.* If pity dwells within your noble breast,  
(As sure it does) Oh, speak not to me thus.

*Hast.* Can I behold thee, and not speak of love?  
Ev'n now, thus sadly as thou stand'st before me,  
Thus desolate, dejected, and forlorn,  
Thy softness steals upon my yielding senses,  
Till my soul faints, and sickens with desire;  
How canst thou give this motion to my heart,  
And bid my tongue be still?

*J. Sh.* Cast round your eyes  
Upon the high-born beauties of the court;  
Behold, like opening roses, where they bloom,  
Sweet to the sense, unsully'd all, and spotless;  
There choose some worthy partner of your heart,  
To fill your arms, and bless your virtuous bed;  
Nor turn your eyes this way, "where sin and misery,  
" Like loathsome weeds have over-run the soil,  
" And the destroyer, shame, has laid all waste."

*Hast.* What means this peevish, this fantastic  
change?

Where is thy wonted pleasantness of face,  
Thy wonted graces, and thy dimpled smiles?  
Where hast thou lost thy wit, and sportive mirth?  
That cheerful heart, which us'd to dance for ever,

And cast a day of gladness all around thee?

*J. Sh.* Yes, I will own I merit the reproach;  
 And for those foolish days of wanton pride,  
 My soul is justly humbled to the dust:  
 All tongues, like yours, are licens'd to upbraid me,  
 Still to repeat my guilt, to urge my infamy,  
 And treat me like that abject thing I have been.  
 " Yet let the saints be witness to this truth,  
 " That now, tho' late, I look with horror back,  
 " That I detest my wretched self, and curse  
 " My past polluted life. All-judging Heaven,  
 " Who knows my crimes, has seen my sorrow for  
 " them."

*Hast.* No more of this dull stuff. 'Tis time enough  
 To whine and mortify thyself with penance,  
 " When the decaying sense is pall'd with pleasure,  
 " And weary nature tires in her last stage;  
 " Then weep and tell thy beads, when alt'ring rheums  
 " Have stain'd the lustre of thy starry eyes,  
 " And failing palsies shake thy withered hand."  
 The present moment claims more gen'rous use;  
 Thy beauty, night, and solitude, reproach me,  
 For having talk'd thus long—come, let me press thee,  
 [*Laying hold of her.*]

Pant on thy bosom, sink into thy arms,  
 And lose myself in the luxurious flood.

*J. Sh.* " Never! by those chaste lights above I  
 " swear,  
 " My soul shall never know pollution more;"  
 Forbear my lord!—here rather let me die;  
 [*Kneeling.*]

" Let quick destruction overtake me here,"  
 And end my sorrows and my shame for ever.

*Hast.* Away with this perverseness,—tis too much.  
 Nay, if you strive—'tis monstrous affectation!  
 [*Striving.*]

*J. Sh.* Retire! I beg you leave me—

*Hast.* Thus to coy it!—  
 With one who knows you too.—

*J. Sh.* For mercy's sake——

*Hast.* Ungrateful woman! Is it thus you pay  
My services?——

*J. Sh.* Abandon me to ruin——  
Rather than urge me——

*Hast.* This way, to your chamber; [*Pulling her.*  
There if you struggle——

*J. Sh.* Help, oh, gracious Heaven!  
Help! Save me! Help!

[*Exit.*

*Enter DUMONT, he interposes.*

*Dum.* My lord! for honour's sake——

*Hast.* Hah! What art thou! Begone!

*Dum.* My duty calls me  
To my attendance on my mistress here.

“*J. Sh.* For pity, let me go.”——

*Hast.* Avaunt! base groom——  
At distance wait, and know thy office better.

*Dum.* “Forego your hold, my lord!” ’tis most un-  
This violence—— [manly

*Hast.* Avoid the room this moment,  
“Or I will tread thy soul out.”

*Dum.* No, my lord——  
The common ties of manhood call me now,  
And bid me thus stand up in the defence  
Of an oppress'd, unhappy, helpless woman.

*Hast.* And dost thou know me, slave?

*Dum.* Yes, thou proud lord!  
I know thee well; know thee with each advantage  
Which wealth, or power, or noble birth can give thee.  
I know thee, too, for one who stains those honours,  
And blots a long illustrious line of ancestry,  
By poorly daring thus to wrong a woman.

*Hast.* ’Tis wondrous well! I see, my saint-like dame,  
You stand provided of your braves and ruffians,  
To man your cause, and bluster in your brothel.

*Dum.* Take back the foul reproach, unmanner'd  
railer!  
Nor urge my rage too far, lest thou should'st find  
I have as daring spirits in my blood

As thou or any of thy race e'er boasted;  
 And tho' no gaudy titles grac'd my birth,  
 "Titles, the servile courtier's lean reward,  
 "Sometimes the pay of virtue, but more oft  
 "The hire which greatness gives to slaves and syco-  
 "phants,"

Yet Heav'n that made me honest, made me more  
 Than ever king did when he made a lord.

*Hast.* Insolent villain! henceforth let this teach  
 thee [Draws, and strikes him.]

The distance 'twixt a peasant and a prince.

*Dum.* Nay, then, my lord, [*Drawing.*] learn you  
 by this, how well

An arm resolv'd can guard its master's life.

[*They fight.*

"*J. Sh.* Oh, my distracting fears! hold, for sweet  
 "Heav'n."

[*They fight, Dumont disarms lord Hastings.*

*Hast.* Confusion! baffled by a base-born hind!

*Dum.* Now, haughty sir, where is our difference  
 now?

Your life is in my hand, and did not honour,  
 The gentleness of blood, and inborn virtue,  
 (Howe'er unworthy I may seem to you)  
 Plead in my bosom, I should take the forfeit.

But wear your sword again; and know, a lord  
 Oppos'd against a man, is but a man. [tune

*Hast.* Curse on my failing arm! Your better for-  
 Has given you vantage o'er me; but perhaps  
 Your triumph may be bought with dear repentance.  
 [*Exit Hastings.*

*Enter JANE SHORE.*

*J. Sh.* Alas; what have ye done? Know ye the  
 pow'r,

The mightiness that waits upon this lord?

*Dum.* Fear not, my worthiest mistress; 'tis a cause  
 In which Heaven's guards shall wait you. O pursue,  
 Pursue the sacred counsels of your soul,  
 Which urge you on to virtue; let not danger,

Nor the incumb'ring world, make faint your purpose.  
Assisting angels shall conduct your steps,  
Bring you to bliss, and crown your days with peace.

*J. Sh.* Oh, that my head were laid, my sad eyes  
clos'd,

And my old corse wound in my shroud to rest!  
My painful heart will never cease to beat,  
Will never know a moment's peace till then.

*Dum.* Would you be happy, leave this fatal place;  
Fly from the court's pernicious neighbourhood;  
Where innocence is sham'd, and blushing modesty  
Is made the scorner's jest; where hate, deceit,  
And deadly ruin, wear the mask of beauty,  
And draw deluded fools with shews of pleasure.

*J. Sh.* Where should I fly, thus helpless and forlorn,  
Of friends and all the means of life bereft?

*Dum.* Belmour, whose friendly care still wakes to  
serve you,  
Has found you out a little peaceful refuge,  
Far from the court and the tumultuous city.  
Within an ancient forest's ample verge,  
There stands a lonely but a healthful dwelling,  
Built for convenience and the use of life:  
Around it fallows, meads, and pastures fair,  
A little garden, and a limpid brook,  
By nature's own contrivance seem'd dispos'd;  
No neighbours, but a few poor simple clowns,  
Honest and true, with a well meaning priest:  
No faction, or domestic fury's rage,  
Did e'er disturb the quiet of that place,  
When the contending nobles shook the land  
With York and Lancaster's disputed sway.  
Your virtue there may find a safe retreat  
From the insulting pow'rs of wicked greatness.

*J. Sh.* Can there be so much happiness in store!  
A cell like that is all my hopes aspire to.  
Haste, then, and thither let us take our flight,  
E'er the clouds gather, and the wintry sky

Descends in storms to intercept our passage.

*Dum.* Will you then go? You glad my very soul.  
 Banish your fears, cast all your cares on me;  
 Plenty and ease, and peace of mind shall wait you,  
 And make your latter days of life most happy.  
 Oh, lady! but I must not, cannot tell you,  
 How anxious I have been for all your dangers,  
 And how my heart rejoices at your safety.  
 So when the spring renews the flow'ry field,  
 And warns the pregnant nightingale to build,  
 She seeks the safest shelter of the wood,  
 Where she may trust her little tuneful brood;  
 Where no rude swains her shady cell may know,  
 No serpents climb, nor blasting winds may blow;  
 Fond of the chosen place, she views it o'er,  
 Sits there, and wanders thro' the grove no more;  
 Warbling she charms it each returning night,  
 And loves it with a mother's dear delight. [*Exeunt.*]

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### ACT III. SCENE I.

*The Court. Enter ALICIA, with a paper.*

*Alicia.* THIS paper to the protector's hand,  
 With care and secrecy, must be convey'd;  
 His bold ambition now avows its aim,  
 To pluck the crown from Edward's infant brow,  
 And fix it on his own. I know he holds  
 My faithless Hastings adverse to his hopes,  
 And much devoted to the orphan king;  
 On that I build: this paper meets his doubts,  
 And marks my hated rival as the cause  
 Of Hastings' zeal for his dead master's sons.  
 Oh, jealousy! thou bane of pleasing friendship,  
 "Thou worst invader of our tender bosoms,"  
 How does thy rancour poison all our softness,  
 And turn our gentle nature into bitterness?  
 See where she comes! once my heart's dearest blessing,



Now my chang'd eyes are blasted with her beauty,  
Loath that known face, and sicken to behold her.

*Enter JANE SHORE.*

*J. Sh.* "Now whither shall I fly to find relief?  
"What charitable hand will aid me now?  
"Will stay my falling steps, support my ruins,  
"And heal my wounded mind with balmy comfort?"  
Oh, my Alicia!

*Alic.* What new grief is this?  
What unforeseen misfortune has surpriz'd thee,  
That racks thy tender heart thus?

*J. Sh.* Oh, Dumont!

*Alic.* Say what of him?

*J. Sh.* That friendly, honest man,  
Whom Belmour brought of late to my assistance,  
On whose kind care, whose diligence and faith,  
My surest trust was built, this very morn  
Was seiz'd on by the cruel hand of power,  
Forc'd from my house, and borne away to prison.

*Alic.* To prison, said you! Can you guess the  
cause?

*J. Sh.* Too well, I fear. His bold defence of me  
Has drawn the vengeance of Lord Hastings on him.

*Alic.* Lord Hastings! Ha!

*J. Sh.* Some fitter time must tell thee  
The tale of my hard hap. Upon the present  
Hang all my poor, my last remaining hopes.  
Within this paper is my suit contain'd;  
Here as the princely Gloster passes forth,  
I wait to give it on my humble knees,  
And move him for redress.

*[She gives the paper to Alicia, who opens and seems to read it.]*

*Alic.* *[Aside.]* Now for a wile,  
To sting my thoughtless rival to the heart;  
To blast her fatal beauties, and divide her  
For ever from my perjur'd Hastings' eyes:  
"The wanderer may then look back to me,  
"And turn to his forsaken home again;"



Their fashions are the same, it cannot fail.

[*Pulling out the other paper.*]

J. Sh. But see the great protector comes this way,  
“ Attended by a train of waiting courtiers.”

Give me the paper, friend.

Alic. [*Aside.*] For love and vengeance!

[*She gives her the other paper.*]

Enter the Duke of GLOSTER, Sir RICHARD RAT-  
CLIFFE, CATESBY, Courtiers, and other Atten-  
dants.

J. Sh. [*Kneeling.*] Oh, noble Gloster, turn thy  
gracious eye,

Incline thy pitying ear to my complaint.

A poor, undone, forsaken, helpless woman,

Intreats a little bread for charity,

To feed her wants, and save her life from perishing.

Glost. Arise, fair dame, and dry your wat'ry  
eyes.

[*Receiving the paper, and raising her.*]

Beshrew me, but 'twere pity of his heart

That could refuse a boon to such a suitress.

Y' have got a noble friend to be your advocate;

A worthy and right gentle lord he is,

And to his trust most true. This present now

Some matters of the state detain our leisure;

Those once dispatch'd, we'll call for you then,

And give your griefs redress, Go to! be comforted.

J. Sh. Good Heav'ns repay your highness for this  
pity,

And show'r down blessings on your princely head.

Come, my Alicia, reach thy friendly arm,

And help me to support this feeble frame,

That nodding totters with oppressive woe,

And sinks beneath its load. [*Exeunt. J. Sh. and Alic.*]

Glost. Now by my holidame!

Heavy of heart she seems, and sore afflicted.

But thus it is when rude calamity

Lays its strong gripe upon these mincing minions;

The dainty gew-gaw forms dissolve at once,

And shiver at the shock. What says her paper?

[*Seeming to read.*

Ha! what is this? Come nearer, Ratcliffe! Catesby!  
Mark the contents, and then divine the meaning.

[*He reads.*

*Wonder not, princely Gloster, at the notice  
This paper brings you from a friend unknown;  
Lord Hastings is inclin'd to call you master,  
And kneel to Richard, as to England's king;  
But Shore's bewitching wife misleads his heart,  
And draws his service to King Edward's sons:  
Drive her away, you break the charm that holds him,  
And he, and all his powers, attend you.*

Rat. 'Tis wonderful!

Cat. The means by which it came  
Yet stranger too!

Glost. You saw it given, but now.

Rat. She could not know the purport.

Glost. No, 'tis plain——

She knows it not, it levels at her life;  
Should she presume to prate of such high matters,  
The meddling harlot, dear she should abide it.

Cat. What hand soe'er it comes from, be assur'd,  
It means your highness well——

Glost. Upon the instant,

Lord Hastings will be here; this morn I mean  
To prove him to the quick; then if he flinch,  
No more but this—away with him at once.

He must be mine or nothing—But he comes!  
Draw nearer this way, and observe me well.

[*They whisper.*

*Enter Lord HASTINGS.*

Hast. This foolish woman hangs about my heart,  
Lingers and wanders in my fancy still;  
This coyness is put on, 'tis art and cunning,  
And worn to urge desire——I must possess her.  
The groom, who lift his saucy hand against me,  
Ere this, is humbled, and repents his daring:  
Perhaps, ev'n she may profit by th' example,

And teach her beauty not to scorn my pow'r.

*Glost.* This do, and wait me ere the council sits.

[*Exeunt Rat. and Cat.*]

My lord, y'are well encounter'd; here has been  
A fair petitioner this morning with us;  
Believe me, she has won me much to pity her:  
Alas! her gentle nature was not made  
To buffet with adversity. I told her  
How worthily her cause you had befriended;  
How much for your good sake we meant to do,  
That you had spoke, and all things should be well.

*Hast.* Your highness binds me ever to your service.

*Glost.* You know your friendship is most potent  
with us,

And shares our power. But of this enough,  
For we have other matters for your ear;  
The state is out of tune; distracting fears,  
And jealous doubts, jar in our public councils;  
Amidst the wealthy city, murmurs rise,  
Lewd railings, and reproach on those that rule,  
With open scorn of government; hence credit,  
And public trust 'twixt man and man, are broke.  
The golden streams of commerce are withheld,  
Which fed the wants of needy hinds and artizans,  
Who therefore curse the great, and threat rebellion.

*Hast.* The resty knaves are over-run with ease,  
As plenty ever is the nurse of faction;  
If in good days, like these, the headstrong heid;  
Grow madly wanton and repine; it is  
Because the reigns of power are held too slack,  
And reverend authority of late  
Has worn a face of mercy more than justice.

*Glost.* Beshrew my heart! but you have well di-  
vin'd

The source of these disorders. Who can wonder  
If riot and misrule o'erturn the realm,  
When the crown sits upon a baby brow?  
Plainly to speak; hence comes the gen'ral cry,  
And sum of all complaint: 'twill ne'er be well

With England (thus they talk) while children govern.

*Hast.* 'Tis true, the king is young; but what of that?

We feel no want of Edward's riper years,  
While Gloster's valour and most princely wisdom  
So well supply our infant sov'reign's place,  
His youth's support, and guardian to his throne.

*Glost.* The council (much I'm bound to thank 'em  
Have plac'd a pageant sceptre in my hand, [for't)  
Barren of power, and subject to control;  
Scorn'd by my foes, and useless to my friends.  
Oh, worthy lord! were mine the rule indeed,  
I think I should not suffer rank offence  
At large to lord it in the common weal;  
Nor would the realm be rent by discord thus,  
Thus fear and doubt, betwixt disputed titles.

*Hast.* Of this I am to learn; as not supposing  
A doubt like this——

*Glost.* Ay, marry, but there is——  
And that of much concern. Have you not heard  
How, on a late occasion, Doctor Shaw  
Has mov'd the people much about the lawfulness  
Of Edward's issue? By right grave authority  
Of learning and religion, plainly proving,  
A bastard scion never should be grafted  
Upon a royal stock; from thence, at full  
Discoursing on my brother's former contract  
To Lady Elizabeth Lucy, long before  
His jolly match with that same buxom widow  
The queen he left behind him——

*Hast.* Ill befall  
Such meddling priests, who kindle up confusion,  
And vex the quiet world with their vain scruples!  
By Heav'n 'tis done in perfect spite to peace,  
Did not the king,  
Our royal master, Edward, in concurrence  
With his estates assembled, well determine  
What course the sov'reign rule should take hence-  
forward?

When shall the deadly hate of faction cease,  
 When shall our long-divided land have rest,  
 If every peevish, moody malecontent  
 Shall set the senseless rabble in an uproar,  
 Fright them with dangers, and perplex their brain,  
 Each day, with some fantastic giddy change?

*Glost.* What if some patriot, for the public good,  
 Should vary from your scheme, ne-would the state?

*Hast.* Curse on the innovating hand attempts it!  
 Remember him, the villain, righteous Heaven,  
 In thy great day of vengeance! Blast the traitor  
 And his pernicious counsels; who, for wealth,  
 For pow'r, the pride of greatness, or revenge,  
 Would plunge his native land in civil wars!

*Glost.* You go too far, my lord.

*Hast.* Your highness' pardon——

Have we so soon forgot those days of ruin,  
 When York and Lancaster drew forth the battles;  
 When, like a matron butcher'd by her sons,  
 “ And cast beside some common way, a spectacle  
 “ Of horror and affright to passers by,”  
 Our groaning country bled at every vein;  
 When murders, rapes, and massacres prevail'd;  
 When churches, palaces, and cities blaz'd;  
 When insolence and barbarism triumph'd,  
 And swept away distinction; peasants trod  
 Upon the necks of nobles; low were laid  
 The reverend crosier, and the holy mitre,  
 And desolation cover'd all the land;  
 Who can remember this, and not like me,  
 Here vow to sheath a dagger in his heart,  
 Whose damn'd ambition would renew those horrors,  
 And set once more that scene of blood before us?

*Glost.* How now! so hot!

*Hast.* So brave, and so resolv'd.

*Glost.* Is then our friendship of so little moment,  
 That you could arm your hand against my life?

*Hast.* I hope your highness does not think I mean it;  
 No, Heav'n forefend that e'er your princely person



Should come within the scope of my resentment.

*Glost.* Oh, noble Hastings! Nay, I must embrace  
you ; *[Embraces him.]*

By holy Paul, y' are a right honest man!

The time is full of danger and distrust,

And warns us to be wary. Hold me not

Too apt for jealousy and light surmise,

If when I meant to lodge you next my heart,

I put your truth to trial. Keep your loyalty,

And live, your king and country's best support :

For me, I ask no more than honour gives,

To think me yours, and rank me with your friends.

*Hast.* Accept what thanks a grateful heart should  
pay,

" Oh, princely Gloster ! Judge me not ungentle,

" Of manners rude, and insolent of speech,

" If, when the public safety is in question,

" My zeal flows warm and eager from my tongue.

" *Glost.* Enough of this : to deal in wordy com-  
pliment

" Is much against the plainness of my nature :

" I judge you by myself, a clear true spirit,

" And, as such, once more join you to my bosom.

" Farewell and be my friend." *[Exit Glost.]*

*Hast.* I am not read,

Nor skill'd and practis'd in the arts of greatness,

To kindle thus, and give a scope to passion.

The duke is surely noble ; but he touch'd me

Ev'n on the tend'rest point ; the master-string

That makes most harmony or discord to me.

I own the glorious subject fires my breast,

And my soul's darling passion stands confess'd ;

Beyond or love's or friendship's sacred band,

Beyond myself, I prize my native land :

On this foundation would I build my fame,

And emulate the Greek and Roman name ;

Think England's peace bought cheaply with my  
blood,

And die with pleasure for my country's good. *[Exit.]*

## ACT IV. SCENE I.

*Continues. Enter Duke of GLOSTER, RATCLIFFE, and CATESBY.*

*Gloster.* THIS was the sum of all: that he would  
No alteration in the present state. [brook

Marry, at last, the testy gentleman  
Was almost mov'd to bid us bold defiance;  
But there I dropt the argument, and changing  
The first design and purport of my speech,  
I prais'd his good affection for young Edward,  
And left him to believe my thoughts like his.  
Proceed we then in this foremention'd matter,  
As nothing bound or trusting to his friendship.

*Rat.* Ill does it thus befall. I could have wish'd  
This lord had stood with us. "His friends are  
"wealthy;

"Thereto, his own possessions large and mighty;

"The vassals and dependants on his power

"Firm in adherence, ready, bold, and many;"

His name had been of vantage to your highness,  
And stood our present purpose much in stead.

*Glost.* This wayward and perverse declining from  
Has warrant'd at full the friendly notice, [us,  
Which we this morn receiv'd. I hold it certain,  
This puling, whining, harlot rules his reason,  
And prompts his zeal for Edward's bastard brood.

*Cat.* If she have such dominion o'er his heart,  
And turn it at her will, you rule her fate;  
And should by inference and apt deduction,  
Be arbiter of his. Is not her bread,  
The very means immediate to her being,  
The bounty of your hand? Why does she live,  
If not to yield obedience to your pleasure,  
To speak, to act, to think as you command? [sage?

*Rat.* Let her instruct her tongue to bear your mes-  
Teach every grace to smile in your behalf,  
And her deluded eyes to gloat for you;  
His ductile reason will be wound about,



Be led and turn'd again, say and unsay,  
Receive the yoke, and yield exact obedience. [low'd,

*Glost.* Your counsel likes me well, it shall be fol-  
She waits without, attending on her suit.

Go, call her in, and leave us here alone.

[*Exeunt Ratcliffe and Catesby.*

How poor a thing is he, how worthy scorn,  
Who leaves the guidance of imperial manhood  
To such a paltry piece of stuff as this is!

A moppet made of prettiness and pride;  
That oftener does her giddy fancies change,  
Than glittering dew-drops in the sun do colours—

Now, shame upon it! was our reason given  
For such a use! “To be thus puff'd about

“Like a dry leaf, and idle straw, a feather,

“The sport of every whiffling blast that blows?

“Beshrew my heart, but it is wond'rous strange;”

Sure there is something more than witchcraft in them,

That masters ev'n the wisest of us all.

*Enter JANE SHORE.*

Oh! you are come most fitly. We have ponder'd

On this your grievance; and tho' some there are,

Nay, and those great ones too, who wou'd enforce

The rigour of our power to afflict you,

And bear a heavy hand; yet fear not you:

We've ta'en you to our favour; our protection

Shall stand between, and shield you from mishap.

*J. Sh.* The blessings of a heart with anguish broken,

And rescu'd from despair, attend your highness.

Alas! my gracious lord, what have I done

To kindle such relentless wrath against me?

“If in the days of all my past offences,

“When most my heart was lifted with delight,

“If I withheld my morsel from the hungry,

“Forgot the widow's want, and orphan's cry;

“If I have known a good I have not shar'd,

“Nor call'd the poor to take his portion with me,

“Let my worst enemies stand forth, and now

“Deny the succour, which I gave not then,”

*Glost.* Marry there are, tho' I believe them not,  
Who say you meddle in affairs of state :  
That you presume to prattle, like a busy-body,  
Give your advice and teach the lords o' th' council  
What fits the order of the common-weal.

*J. Sh.* Oh, that the busy world, at least in this,  
Would take example from a wretch like me!  
None then would waste their hours in foreign thoughts,  
Forget themselves, and what concerns their peace,  
“ To tread the mazes of fantastic falsehood,  
“ To haunt their idle sounds and flying tales,  
“ Thro' all the giddy, noisy courts of rumour;  
“ Malicious slander never would have leisure”  
To search, with prying eyes, for faults abroad,  
If all, like me, consider'd their own hearts,  
And wept the sorrows which they found at home.

*Glost.* Go to! I know your pow'r; and tho' I trust  
To ev'ry breath of fame, I'm not to learn [not  
That Hastings is profess'd your loving vassal.  
But fair befall your beauty: use it wisely,  
And it may stand your fortunes much in stead,  
Give back your forfeit land with large increase,  
And place you high in safety and in honour.  
Nay, I could point a way, the which pursuing,  
You shall not only bring yourself advantage,  
But give the realm much worthy cause to thank you.

*J. Sh.* Oh! where or how——Can my unworthy  
Become an instrument of good to any? [hand  
Instruct your lowly slave, and let me fly  
To yield obedience to your dread command

*Glost.* Why, that's well said—Thus then—Observe  
me well :

The state, for many high and potent reasons,  
Deeming my brother Edward's sons unfit  
For the imperial weight of England's crown—

*J. Sh.* Alas! for pity.

*Glost.* Therefore have resolv'd  
To set aside their unavailing infancy,  
And vest the sov'reign rule in abler hands.

This, tho' of great importance to the public,  
Hastings, for very peevishness and spleen,  
Does stubbornly oppose.

*J. Sh.* Does he? Does Hastings?

*Glost.* Ay, Hastings.

*J. Sh.* Reward him for the noble deed, just Heav'n's:  
For this one action, guard him, and distinguish him  
With signal mercies, and with great deliverance,  
Save him from wrong, adversity, and shame.  
Let never fading honours flourish round him,  
And consecrate his name: ev'n to time's end:  
"Let him know nothing else but good on earth,  
"And everlasting blessedness hereafter."

*Glost.* How now!

*J. Sh.* The poor, forsaken, royal little ones!  
Shall they be left a prey to savage power?  
Can they lift up their harmless hands in vain,  
Or cry to Heaven for help, and not be heard?  
Impossible! Oh, gallant, generous Hastings,  
Go on, pursue! assert the sacred cause:  
Stand forth, thou proxy of all-ruling Providence,  
And save the friendless infants from oppression.  
Saints shall assist thee with prevailing prayers,  
And warring angels combat on thy side.

*Glost.* You're passing rich in this same heav'nly  
speech,

And spend it at your pleasure. Nay, but mark me!  
My favour is not bought with words like these.  
Go to—you'll teach your tongue another tale.

*J. Sh.* No, tho' the royal Edward has undone me,  
He was my king, my gracious master still;  
"He lov'd me too, tho' 'twas a guilty a flame,  
"And fatal to my peace, yet still he lov'd me;  
"With fondness, and with tenderness he doated,  
"Dwelt in my eyes, and liv'd but in my smiles:"  
And can I—O my heart abhors the thought!  
Stand by, and see his children robb'd of right?

*Glost.* Dare not, ev'n for thy soul, to thwart me  
further!



And rot upon a dunghill. Thro' the city  
See it proclaim'd, that none, on pain of death,  
Presume to give her comfort, food, or harbour:  
Who ministers the smallest comfort dies.  
Her house, her costly furniture and wealth,  
"The purchase of her loose luxurious life,"  
We seize on for the profit of the state.  
Away! Begone!

*J. Sh.* Oh, thou most righteous judge—  
Humbly behold, I bow myself to thee,  
And own thy justice in this hard decree:  
No longer, then my ripe offences spare.  
But what I merit, let me learn to bear.  
Yet since 'tis all my wretchedness can give,  
For my past crimes my forfeit life receive;  
No pity for my sufferings here I crave,  
And only hope forgiveness in the grave.

[*Exit J. Shore, guarded by Catesby and others.*

*Glost.* So much for this. Your project's at an end.  
[*To Ratcliffe.*

This idle toy, this hilding scorns my power,  
And sets us all at nought. See that a guard  
Be ready at my call.—

*Rat.* The council waits  
Upon your highness' leisure.—

*Glost.* Bid them enter.

*Enter the Duke of BUCKINGHAM, Earl of DERBY,  
Bishop of ELY, Lord HASTINGS, and others, as to  
the council. The Duke of GLOSTER takes his place  
at the upper end, then the rest sit.*

*Derb.* In happy times we are assembled here,  
T' appoint the day, and fix the solemn pomp,  
For placing England's crown, with all due rites,  
Upon our sov'reign Edward's youthful brow.

*Hast.* Some busy meddling knaves, 'tis said, there are.  
As such will still be prating, who presume  
To carp and cavil at his royal right;  
Therefore, I hold it fitting, with the soonest,  
T' appoint the order of the coronation;



So to approve our duty to the king,  
And stay the babbling of such vain gainsayers.

*Derb.* We all attend to know your highness' pleasure.  
[To Gloster.

*Glost.* My lords, a set of worthy men you are,  
Prudent, and just, and careful for the state;  
Therefore, to your most grave determination  
I yield myself in all things; and demand  
What punishment your wisdom shall think meet  
T' inflict upon those damnable contrivers,  
Who shall with potions, charms, and 'witching drugs,  
Practise against our person and our life?

*Hast.* So much I hold the king your highness'  
So precious are you to the common-weal, [debtor,  
That I presume not only for myself,  
But in behalf of these my noble brothers,  
To say, whoe'er they be, they merit death.

*Glost.* Then judge yourselves, convince your eyes  
of truth:

Behold my arm, thus blasted, dry, and wither'd,  
[Pulling up his sleeves.

Shrunk like a foul abortion, and decay'd,  
Like some untimely product of the seasons.  
Robb'd of its properties of strength and office.  
This is the sorcery of Edward's wife.  
Who, in conjunction with that harlot Shore,  
And other like confed'rate midnight hags,  
By force of potent spells, of bloody characters;  
And conjurations horrible to hear,  
Call fiends and spectres from the yawning deep,  
And set the ministers of hell at work,  
To torture and despoil me of my life.

*Hast.* If they have done this deed—

*Glost.* If they have done it!

Talk'st thou to me of ifs, audacious traitor!  
Thou art that strumpet witch's chief abettor,  
The patron and comploter of her mischiefs,  
And join'd in this contrivance for my death.  
Nay start not, lords—What ho! a guard there, sirs!

*Enter Guards.*

Lord Hastings, I arrest thee of high treason.  
 Seize him, and bear him instantly away.  
 He sha'not live an hour. By holy Paul,  
 I will not dine before his head be brought me.  
 Ratcliffe, stay you and see that it be done:  
 The rest that love me, rise and follow me.

*[Exeunt Gloster, and the Lords following.]**Manent Lord HASTINGS, RATCLIFFE, and Guards.*

*Hast.* What! and no more but this—How! to the scaffold:

Oh, gentle Ratcliffe! tell me, do I hold thee?  
 Or, if I dream, what shall I do to wake,  
 To break, to struggle thro' this dread confusion?  
 For surely death itself is not so painful  
 As is this sudden horror and surprise.

*[absolute]*

*Rat.* You heard the duke's commands to me were  
 Therefore, my lord, address you to your shrift,  
 With all good speed you may. Summon your courage,  
 And be yourself; for you must die this instant.

*Hast.* Yes, Ratcliffe, I will take thy friendly counsel,  
 And die as a man should; 'tis somewhat hard,  
 To call my scatter'd spirits home at once:  
 But since what must be, must be—let necessity  
 Supply the place of time and preparation,  
 And arm me for the blow. 'Tis but to die,  
 'Tis but to venture on that common hazard,  
 Which many a time in battle I have run:  
 " 'Tis but to do, what at that very moment,  
 " In many nations of the peopled earth,  
 " A thousand and a thousand shall do with me;"  
 'Tis but to close my eyes and shut out day-light,  
 To view no more the wicked ways of men,  
 No longer to behold the tyrant Gloster,  
 And be a weeping witness of the woes,  
 The desolation, slaughter, and calamities,  
 Which he shall bring on this unhappy land.

*Enter ALICIA.*

*Alic.* Stand off, and let me pass—I will, I must,



Catch him once more in these despairing arms.  
And hold him to my heart—O Hastings! Hastings!

*Hast.* Alas! why com'st thou at this dreadful moment,

To fill me with new terrors, new distractions;  
To turn me wild with thy distemper'd rage,  
And shock the peace of my departing soul?  
Away, I pr'ythee leave me!

*Alic.* Stop a minute——

Till my full griefs find passage—Oh, the tyrant!  
Perdition fall on Gloster's head and mine.

*Hast.* What means thy frantic grief?

*Alic.* I cannot speak——

But I have murder'd thee—Oh, I could tell thee!

*Hast.* Speak and give ease to thy conflicting passion,  
Be quick, nor keep me longer in suspense,  
Time presses, and a thousand crowding thoughts  
Break in at once! this way and that they snatch,  
They tear my hurry'd soul: all claim attention,  
And yet not one is heard. Oh! speak, and leave me,  
For I have business would employ an age,  
And but a minute's time to get it done in.

*Alic.* That, that's my grief—'tis I that urge thee on,  
Thus haunt thee to the toil, sweep thee from earth,  
And drive thee down this precipice of fate.

*Hast.* Thy reason is grown wild. Could thy weak  
hand

Bring on this mighty ruin? If it could,  
What have I done so grievous to thy soul,  
So deadly, so beyond the reach of pardon,  
That nothing but my life can make atonement?

*Alic.* Thy cruel scorn hath stung me to the heart,  
And set my burning bosom all in flames:  
Raving and mad I flew to my revenge,  
And writ I know not what—told the protector,  
That Shore's detested wife, by wiles, had won thee  
To plot against his greatness—He believ'd it,  
(Oh, dire event of my pernicious counsel!)  
And, while I meant destruction on her head,

H' has turn'd it all on thine.

*Hast.* Accursed jealousy!

“ Oh, merciless, wild and unforgiving fiend!

“ Blindfold it runs to undistinguish'd mischief,

“ And murders all it meets. Curs'd be its rage,

“ For there is none so deadly; doubly curs'd

“ Be all those easy fools who give it harbour;

“ Who turn a monster loose among mankind,

“ Fiercer than famine, war, or spotted pestilence;

“ Baneful as death, and horrible as hell.

“ *Alic.* If thou wilt curse, curse rather thine own  
“ falsehood;

“ Curse the lewd maxims of thy perjur'd sex,

“ Which taught thee first to laugh at faith and justice;

“ To scorn the solemn sanctity of oaths,

“ And made a jest of a poor woman's ruin:

“ Curse thy proud heart, and thy insulting tongue,

“ That rais'd this fatal fury in my soul,

“ And urg'd my vengeance to undo us both.”

*Hast.* Oh, thou inhuman! Turn thy eyes away,  
And blast me not with their destructive beams:

Why should I curse thee with my dying breath?

Begone! and let me die in peace.

*Alic.* Can'st thou—Oh, cruel Hastings, leave me  
thus!

Hear me, I beg thee—I conjure thee, hear me!

While with an agonizing heart, I swear,

By all the pangs I feel, by all the sorrows,

The terrors and despair thy loss shall give me,

My hate was on my rival bent alone.

Oh! had I once divin'd, false as thou art,

A danger to thy life, I would have dy'd,

I would have met it for thee, and made bare

My ready faithful breast to save thee from it.

*Hast.* Now mark! and tremble at Heaven's just  
award!

While thy insatiate wrath, and fell revenge,

Pursu'd the innocence which never wroug'd thee,

Behold, the mischief falls on thee and me:

Remorse and heaviness of heart shall wait thee,  
And everlasting anguish be thy portion :  
For me, the snares of death are wound about me,  
And now, in one poor moment, I am gone.  
Oh! if thou hast one tender thought remaining,  
Fly to thy closet, fall upon thy knees,  
And recommend my parting soul to mercy.

*Alic.* Oh! yet before I go for ever from thee,  
Turn thee in gentleness and pity to me, [*Kneeling.*  
And in compassion of my strong affliction,  
Say, is it possible can you forgive  
The fatal rashness of ungovern'd love?  
For, oh! 'tis certain, if I had not lov'd thee  
Beyond my peace, my reason, fame, and life,  
“ Desir'd to death, and doated to distraction,”  
This day of horror never should have known us.

*Hast.* Oh, rise, and let me hush thy stormy sor-  
rows. [*Raising her.*

Assuage thy tears for I will chide no more,  
No more upbraid thee, thou unhappy fair one.  
I see the hand of Heaven is arm'd against me;  
And, in mysterious Providence, decrees  
To punish me by thy mistaken hand.  
Most righteous doom! for, oh, while I behold thee,  
Thy wrongs rise up in terrible array,  
And charge thy ruin on me; thy fair fame,  
Thy spotless beauty, innocence, and youth,  
Dishonour'd, blasted, and betray'd me.

*Alic.* And does thy heart relent for my undoing?  
Oh, that inhuman Gloster could be mov'd,  
But half so easily as I can pardon!

*Hast.* Here then exchange we mutually forgiveness.  
So may the guilt of all my broken vows,  
My perjuries to thee, be all forgotten,  
As here my soul acquits thee of my death,  
As here I part without one angry thought,  
As here I leave thee with the softest tenderness,  
Mourning the chance of our disastrous loves,  
And begging Heav'n to bless and to support thee.

*Rat.* My lord, dispatch ; the duke has sent to chide me,

For loitering in my duty——

*Hast.* I obey.

*Alic.* Insatiate savage monster ! Is a moment  
So tedious to thy malice ? Oh, repay him,  
Thou great avenger ! Give him blood for blood :  
Guilt haunt him ! fiends pursue him ! lightnings blast  
him !

“ Some horrid, cursed kind of death o’ertake him,

“ Sudden, and in the fulness of his sins !”

That he may know how terrible it is,

To want that moment he denies thee now.

*Hast.* This rage is all in vain, “ that tears thy bosom ;

“ Like a poor bird that flutters in its cage,

“ Thou beat’st thyself to death.” Retire, I beg thee ;

To see thee thus, thou know’st not how it wound’st

Thy agonies are added to my own, [me ;

And make the burthen more than I can bear.

Farewell—Good angels visit thy afflictions,

And bring thee peace and comfort from above.

*Alic.* Oh ! stab me to the heart, some pitying hand.

Now strike me dead———

*Hast.* One thing I had forgot——

I charge thee by our present common miseries ;

By our past loves, if yet they have a name ;

By all thy hopes of peace here and hereafter,

Let not the rancour of thy hate pursue

The innocence of thy unhappy friend ;

Thou know’st who ’tis I mean : Oh ! should’st thou  
wrong her,

Just Heav’n shall double all thy woes upon thee,

And make ’em know no end—Remember this,

As the last warning of a dying man.

Farewell, for ever ! [The guards carry Hastings off.

*Alic.* For ever ! Oh, for ever !

Oh, who can bear to be a wretch for ever !

My rival, too ! His last thoughts hung on her,

And as he parted, left a blessing for her :

Shall she be blest, and I be curst, for ever?  
No; since her fatal beauty was the cause  
Of all my suff'rings, let her share my pains;  
Let her, like me, of ev'ry joy forlorn,  
Devote the hour when such a wretch was born;  
" Like me, to deserts and to darkness run,  
" Abhor the day, and curse the golden sun;"  
Cast every good, and every hope behind:  
Detest the works of nature, loath mankind;  
Like me, with cries distracted, fill the air,  
Tear her poor bosom, rend her frantic hair:  
And prove the torments of the last despair. [*Exit.*

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## ACT V. SCENE I.

*The Street. Enter BELMOUR and DUMONT.*

*Dumont.* You saw her, then?

*Bel.* I met her, as returning,  
In solemn penance from the public cross.  
Before her, certain rascal officers,  
Slaves in authority, the knaves of justice,  
Proclaim'd the tyrant Gloster's cruel orders.  
" On either side her march'd an ill-look'd priest,  
" Who with severe, with horrid haggard eyes,  
" Did ever and anon, by turns, upbraid her,  
" And thunder in her trembling ear damnation."  
Around her, numberless, the rabble flow'd,  
Should'ring each other, crowding for a view,  
Gaping and gazing, taunting and reviling;  
Some pitying—but those, alas! how few!  
The most, such iron hearts we are, and such  
The base barbarity of human kind,  
With insolence and lewd reproach pursu'd her,  
Hooting and railing, and with villainous hands  
Gath'ring the filth from out the common ways,  
To hurl upon her head.

*Dum.* Inhuman dogs!  
How did she bear it?



*Bel.* With the gentlest patience;  
Submissive, sad, and lowly was her look;  
A burning taper in her hand she bore,  
And on her shoulders carelessly confus'd,  
With loose neglect, her lovely tresses hung:  
Upon her cheek a faintish flush was spread;  
Feeble she seem'd, and sorely smit with pain.  
While barefoot as she trod the flinty pavement,  
Her footsteps all along were mark'd with blood,  
Yet, silent still she pass'd and unrepining;  
Her streaming eyes bent ever on the earth,  
Except when in some bitter pang of sorrow,  
To Heav'n she seem'd in fervent zeal to raise,  
And beg that mercy man deny'd her here.

*Dum.* When was this piteous sight?

*Bel.* These last two days.

You know my care was wholly bent on you,  
To find the happy means of your deliverance,  
Which but for Hastings' death I had not gained.  
During that time, altho' I have not seen her,  
Yet divers trusty messengers I've sent,  
To wait about, and watch a fit convenience  
To give her some relief, but all in vain;  
A churlish guard attends upon her steps,  
Who menace those with death, that bring her comfort,  
And drive all succour from her.

*Dum.* Let 'em threaten;

Let proud oppression prove its fiercest malice;  
So Heav'n besfriend my soul, as here I vow  
To give her help, and share one fortune with her.

*Bel.* Mean you to see her, thus, in your own form?

*Dum.* I do.

*Bel.* And have you thought upon the consequence?

*Dum.* What is there I should fear?

*Bel.* Have you examin'd

Into your inmost heart, and try'd at leisure  
The sev'ral secret springs that move the passions?  
Has mercy fix'd her empire there so sure,

That wrath and vengeance never may return?  
Can you resume a husband's name, and bid  
That wakeful dragon, fierce resentment, sleep?

“ *Dum.* Why dost thou search so deep, and urge  
“ my memory,

“ To conjure up my wrongs to life again?

“ I have long labour'd to forget myself,

“ To think on all time backward, like a space

“ Idle and void, where nothing e'er had being:

“ But thou hast peopled it again: Revenge

“ And jealousy renew their horrid forms,

“ Shoot all their fires, and drive me to distraction.

“ *Bel.* Far be the thought from me! My care was  
“ only

“ To arm you for the meeting: better were it

“ Never to see her, than to let that name

“ Recall forgotten rage, and make the husband

“ Destroy the gen'rous pity of Dumont.”

~ *Dum.* O thou hast set my busy brain at work,

And now she musters up a train of images,

Which, to preserve my peace, I had cast aside,

And sunk in deep oblivion—Oh, that form!

That angel face on which my dotage hung!

How I have gaz'd upon her, till my soul

With very eagerness went forth towards her,

And issu'd at my eyes—Was there a gem

Which the sun ripens in the Indian mine,

Or the rich bosom of the ocean yields;

What was there art could make or wealth could buy,

Which I have left unsought to deck her beauty?

What could her king do more?—And yet she fled.

*Bel.* Away with that sad fancy——

*Dum.* Oh that day!

The thought of it must live for ever with me.

I met her, Belmour, when the royal spoiler

Bore her in triumph from my widow'd home!

Within his chariot by his side she sat,

And listen'd to his talk with downward looks,

Till sudden as she chanc'd aside to glance,



Her eyes encounter'd mine—Oh! then my friend!  
Oh! who can paint my grief and her amazement!  
As at the stroke of death, twice turn'd she pale;  
And twice a burning crimson blush'd all o'er her;  
Then, with a shriek, heart-wounding, loud she cry'd,  
While down her cheeks two gushing torrents ran  
Fast falling on her hands, which thus she wrung—  
Mov'd at her grief the tyrant ravisher,  
With courteous action woo'd her oft to turn;  
Earnest he seem'd to plead, but all in vain:  
Ev'n to the last she bent her sight towards me,  
And follow'd me—till I had lost myself.

*Bel.* Alas, for pity! Oh! those speaking tears!  
Could they be false? Did she not suffer with you?  
For though the king by force possessed her person,  
Her unconsenting heart dwelt still with you;  
If all her former woes were not enough,  
Look on her now; behold her where she wanders  
Hunted to death, distress'd on every side,  
With no one hand to help; and tell me then,  
If ever misery were known like hers?

*Dum.* And can she bear it? Can that delicate frame  
Endure the beating of a storm so rude?  
Can she, for whom the various seasons chang'd  
To court her appetite and crown her board,  
For whom the foreign vintages were press'd,  
For whom the merchant spread his silken stores,  
Can she—

Intreat for bread, and want the needful raiment,  
To wrap her shiv'ring bosom from the weather?  
When she was mine, no care came ever nigh her;  
I thought the gentlest breeze that wakes the spring,  
Too rough to breathe upon her; cheerfulness  
Danc'd all the day before her, and at night  
Soft slumbers waited on her downy pillow—  
Now sad and shelterless, perhaps she lies,  
Where piercing winds blow sharp, and the chill rain  
Drops from some pent-house on her wretched head,  
Drenches her locks, and kills her with the cold.

It is too much——Hence with her past offences,  
They are aton'd at full——Why stay we, then?  
Oh! let us haste, my friend, and find her out.

*Bel.* Somewhere about this quarter of the town,  
I hear the poor abandon'd creature lingers:  
Her guard, tho' set with strictest watch to keep  
All food and friendship from her, yet permit her  
To wander in the streets, there choose her bed,  
And rest her head on what cold stone she pleases.

*Dum.* Here let us then divide; each in his round  
To search her sorrows out; whose hap it is  
First to behold her, this way let him lead  
Her fainting steps, and meet we here together.

[*Exeunt.*

*Enter JANE SHORE, her hair hanging loose on her shoulders, and bare-footed.*

*J. Sh.* Yet, yet endure, nor murmur, oh, my soul!  
For are not thy transgressions great and numberless;  
Do they not cover thee like rising floods,  
And press thee like a weight of waters down?  
“Does not the hand of righteousness afflict thee?  
“And who shall plead against it? Who shall say  
“To power almighty, thou hast done enough;  
“Or bid his dreadful rod of vengeance stay?”  
Wait then with patience, till the circling hours  
Shall bring the time of thy appointed rest,  
And lay thee down in death. “The hireling thus  
“With labour drudges out the painful day,  
“And often looks with long expecting eyes  
“To see the shadows rise, and be dismiss'd.”  
And hark, methinks the roar that late pursu'd me,  
Sinks like the murmurs of a falling wind,  
And softens into silence. Does revenge  
And malice then grow weary, and forsake me?  
My guard, too, that observ'd me still so close,  
Tire in the task of their inhumam office,  
And loiter far behind. Alas! I faint,  
My spirits fail at once—This is the door  
Of my Alicia——Blessed opportunity!

I'll steal a little succour from her goodness,  
Now while no eye observes me. [*She knocks at the door.*  
*Enter a Servant.*

Is your lady,  
My gentle friend, at home! Oh, bring me to her. [*Going in.*

*Serv.* Hold, mistress, whither would you? [*Pulling her back.*

*J. Sh.* Do you know me?

*Serv.* I know you well, and know my orders, too:  
You must not enter here——

*J. Sh.* Tell my Alicia,  
'Tis I would see her.

*Serv.* She is ill at ease,  
And will admit no visitor.

*J. Sh.* But tell her  
'Tis I, her friend, the partner of her heart,  
Wait at the door, and beg——

*Serv.* 'Tis all in vain,——  
Go hence, and howl to those that will regard you.

[*Shuts the door, and exit.*

*J. Sh.* It was not always thus; the time has been,  
When this unfriendly door, that bars my passage,  
Flew wide, and almost leap'd from off its hinges,  
To give me entrance here; when this good house  
“Has pour'd forth all its dwellers to receive me:”  
When my approaches made a little holiday,  
And every face was dress'd in smiles to meet me:  
But now 'tis otherwise, and those who bless'd me,  
Now curse me to my face. Why should I wander,  
Stray further on, for I can die ev'n here!

[*She sits down at the door.*

*Enter ALICIA in disorder, two Servants following.*

*Alic.* What wretch art thou, whose misery and  
baseness

Hangs on my door; whose hateful whine of woe  
Breaks in upon my sorrows, and distracts  
My jarring senses with thy beggar's cry?

*J. Sh.* A very beggar, and a wretch, indeed;

One driven by strong calamity to seek  
 For succours here; one perishing for want,  
 Whose hunger has not tasted food these three days;  
 And humbly asks; for charity's dear sake,  
 A draught of water and a little bread.

*Alic.* And dost thou come to me, to me, for bread?  
 I know thee not—Go—hunt for it abroad,  
 Where wanton hands upon the earth have scatter'd it,  
 Or cast it on the waters—Mark the eagle,  
 And hungry vulture, where they wind the prey;  
 Watch where the ravens of the valley feed,  
 And seek thy food with them—I know thee not.

*J. Sh.* And yet there was a time, when my Alicia  
 Has thought unhappy Shore her dearest blessing,  
 And mourn'd the live-long day she pass'd without  
 me;

“ When pair'd like turtles, we were still together;

“ When often as we prattled arm in arm,”

Inclining fondly to me she has sworn,

She lov'd me more than all the world besides.

*Alic.* Ha! say'st thou! Let me look upon thee  
 well——

'Tis true—I know thee now—A mischief on thee!

Thou art that fatal fair, that cursed she,

That set my brain a madding. Thou hast robb'd me;

Thou hast undone me—Murder! Oh, my Hastings!

See his pale bloody head shoots glaring by me.

“ Give me him back again, thou soft deluder,

“ Thou beauteous witch.”

*J. Sh.* Alas! I never wrong'd you——

“ Oh! then be good to me; have pity on me;

“ Thou never knew'st the bitterness of want,

“ And may'st thou never know it. Oh! bestow

“ Some poor remain, the voiding of thy table,

“ A morsel to support my famish'd soul.”

*Alic.* Avaunt! and come not near me——

*J. Sh.* To thy hand

I trusted all; gave my whole store to thee,

Nor do I ask it back; allow me but

The smallest pittance, give me but to eat,  
Lest I fall down and perish here before thee.

*Alic.* Nay! tell not me! Where is thy king, thy  
Edward,  
And all the smiling cringing train of courtiers,  
That bent the knee before thee?

*J. Sh.* Oh! for mercy!

*Alic.* Mercy! I know it not—for I am miserable.  
I'll give thee misery, for here she dwells;  
This is her house, where the sun never dawns,  
The bird of night sits screaming o'er the roof,  
Grim spectres weep along the horrid gloom,  
And nought is heard but wailings and lamentings.  
Hark! something cracks above! it shakes, it totters!  
And see the nodding ruin falls to crush me!  
'Tis fall'n, 'tis here! I felt it on my brain!

“ 1 *Ser.* This sight disorders her—

“ 2 *Ser.* Retire, dear lady—

“ And leave this woman.”—

*Alic.* Let her take my counsel:  
Why should'st thou be a wretch? Stab, tear thy  
heart,

And rid thyself of this detested being,  
I wo'not linger long behind thee here.  
A waving flood of bluish fire hangs o'er me;  
And now 'tis out, and I am drown'd in blood.  
Ha! what art thou! thou horrid headless trunk?  
It is my Hastings! See he wafts me on!

Away! I go, I fly! I follow thee!

“ But come not thou with mischief-making beauty

“ To interpose between us, look not on him,

“ Give thy fond arts and thy delusions o'er,

“ For thou shalt never, never part us more.

[*She runs off, her Servants following.*]

*J. Sh.* Alas! she raves; her brain, I fear, is turn'd.  
In mercy look upon her, gracious Heav'n,  
Nor visit her for any wrong to me.  
Sure I am near upon my journey's end;  
My head runs round, my eyes begin to fail,



And dancing shadows swim before my sight.

"I can no more, [*Lies down.*] receive me, thou cold earth,

Thou common parent, take me to thy bosom,  
And let me rest with thee.

*Enter BELMOUR.*

*Bel.* Upon the ground!

Thy miseries can never lay thee lower,  
Look up, thou poor afflicted one! thou mourner,  
Whom none has comforted! Where are thy friends,  
The dear companions of thy joyful days,  
Whose hearts thy warm prosperity make glad,  
Whose arms were taught to grow like ivy round thee,  
And bind thee to their bosoms!—Thus with thee,  
Thus let us live, and let us die, they said,  
"For sure thou art the sister of our loves,  
"And nothing shall divide us."—Now where are they?

*J. Sh.* Ah, Belmour! where indeed? They stand aloof,

And view my desolation from afar.

"When they pass by, they shake their heads in scorn,

"And cry, behold the harlot and her end!"

And yet thy goodness turns aside to pity me.

Alas! there may be danger; get thee gone;

Let me not pull a ruin on thy head.

Leave me to die alone, for I am fall'n

Never to rise, and all relief is vain.

*Bel.* Yet raise thy drooping head; for I am come  
To chase away despair. Behold! where yonder  
That honest man, that faithful, brave Dumont,  
Is hasting to thy aid——

*J. Sh.* Dumont! Ha! where!

[*Raising herself, and looking about.*]

Then Heav'n has heard my pray'r: his very name  
Renews the springs of life, and cheers my soul.  
Has he then 'scap'd the snare?

*Bel.* He has; but see——

He comes unlike to that Dumont you knew,



For now he wears your better angel's form,  
And comes to visit you with peace and pardon.

*Enter SHORE.*

*J. Sh.* Speak, tell me! Which is he? And ho!  
what would

This dreadful vision! See it comes upon me—

It is my husband—Ah! [*She swoons.*]

*Sh.* She faints! support her!

“Sustain her head, while I infuse this cordial

“Into her dying lips—from spicy drugs,

“Rich herbs and flow'rs, the potent juice is drawn;

“With wondrous force it strikes the lazy spirits,

“Drives them around, and wakens life anew.”

*Bel.* Her weakness could not bear the strong sur-  
prize.

But see, she stirs! And the returning blood

Faintly begins to blush again, and kindle

Upon her ashy cheek—

*Sh.* So—gently raise her— [*Raising her up.*]

*J. Sh.* Ha! What art thou? Belmour!

*Bel.* How fare you, lady?

*J. Sh.* My heart is thrilled with horror—

*Bel.* Be of courage—

Your husband lives! 'tis he, my worthiest friend—

*J. Sh.* Still art thou there!—still dost thou hover  
round me!

Oh, save me, Belmour, from his angry shade!

*Bel.* 'Tis he himself!—he lives! look up—

*J. Sh.* I dare not!

Oh! that my eyes could shut him out for ever—

*Sh.* Am I so hateful, then, so deadly to thee,  
To blast thy eyes with horror? Since I'm grown  
A burthen to the world, myself, and thee,  
Wou'd I had ne'er surviv'd to see thee more.

*J. Sh.* Oh, thou most injur'd—dost thou live, in-  
deed?

Fall then, ye mountains, on my guilty head;  
Hide me, ye rocks, within your secret caverns;

Cast thy black veil upon my shame, O night!  
And shield me with thy sable wings for ever.

*Sh.* Why dost thou turn away?—Why tremble thus?

Why thus indulge thy fears? and in despair  
Abandon thy distracted soul to horror?  
Cast every black and guilty thought behind thee,  
And let 'em never vex thy quiet more.  
My arms, my heart, are open to receive thee,  
To bring thee back to thy forsaken home,  
With tender joy, with fond forgiving love,  
And all the longings of my first desires.

“ *J. Sh.* No, arm thy brow with vengeance, and appear

“ The minister of Heaven's inquiring justice.

“ Array thyself all terrible for judgment,

“ Wrath in thy eyes, and thunder in thy voice;

“ Pronounce my sentence, and if yet there be

“ A woe I have not felt, inflict it on me.

“ *Sh.* The measure of thy sorrows is complete;

“ And I am come to snatch thee from injustice.

“ The hand of power no more shall crush thy weakness,

“ Nor proud oppression grind thy humble soul.

“ *J. Sh.* Art thou not risen by miracle from death?

“ Thy shroud is fall'n from off thee, and the grave

“ Was bid to give thee up, that thou might'st come

“ The messenger of grace and goodness to me,

“ To seal my peace, and bless me ere I go.

“ Oh! let me then fall down beneath thy feet,

“ And weep my gratitude for ever there;

“ Give me your drops, ye soft-descending rains,

“ Give me your streams, ye never ceasing springs,

“ That my sad eyes may still supply my duty,

“ And feed an everlasting flood of sorrow.

“ *Sh.* Waste not thy feeble spirits—I have long

“ Beheld, unknown, thy mourning and repentance;

“ Therefore my heart has set aside the past;

“ And holds thee white as unoffending innocence:

" Therefore, in spite of cruel Gloster's rage,  
" Soon as my friend had broke my prison-doors,  
" I flew to thy assistance." Let us haste,  
Now while occasion seems to smile upon us,  
Forsake this place of shame, and find a shelter.

*J. Sh.* What shall I say to you? But I obey—

*Sh.* Lean on my arm——

*J. Sh.* Alas! I'm wondrous faint:

But that's not strange, I have not eat these three  
days.

*Sh.* Oh, merciless! " Look here, my love, I've  
" brought thee

" Some rich conserves——

" *J. Sh.* How can you be so good?

" But you were ever thus. I well remember

" With what fond care, what diligence of love,

" You lavish'd out your wealth to buy me pleasures,

" Preventing every wish: have you forgot

" The costly string of pearl you brought me home,

" And ty'd about my neck?—How could I leave you?

" *Sh.* Taste some of this, or this——

" *J. Sh.* You're strangely alter'd——

" Say, gentle Belmour, is he not? How pale

" Your visage is become! Your eyes are hollow;

" Nay, you are wrinkled too——Alas, the day!

" My wretchedness has cost you many a tear,

" And many a bitter pang since last we parted.

" *Sh.* No more of that——Thou talk'st, but do'st  
" not eat.

" *J. Sh.* My feeble jaws forget their common office,

" My tasteless tongue cleaves to the clammy roof,

" And now a general loathing grows upon me."

Oh! I am sick at heart!

*Sh.* Thou murd'rous sorrow!

Wo't thou still drink her blood, pursue her still!

Must she then die! Oh, my poor penitent!

Speak peace to thy sad heart: she hears me not;

Grief masters every sense—" help me to hold her."——

*Enter CATESBY, with a Guard.*

*Cat.* Seize on 'em both as traitors to the state—

*Bel.* What means this violence?—

*[Guards lay hold on Shore and Belmour.]*

*Cat.* Have we not found you,  
In scorn of the protector's strict command,  
Assisting this base woman, and abetting  
Her infamy.

*Sh.* Infamy on thy head!

Thou tool of power, thou pander to authority!  
I tell thee, knave, thou know'st of none so virtuous,  
And she that bore thee was an Æthiop to her.

*Cat.* You'll answer this at full—Away with 'em.

*Sh.* Is charity grown treason to your court?  
What honest man would live beneath such rulers?  
I am content that we should die together—

*Cat.* Convey the men to prison; but for her,  
Leave her to hunt her fortune as she may.

*J. Sh.* I will not part with him—for me!—for me!  
Oh! must he die for me!

*[Following him as he is carried off—She falls.]*

*Sh.* Inhuman villains! *[Breaks from the Guards.]*  
Stand off! The agonies of death are on her—  
She pulls, she gripes me hard with her cold hand.

*J. Sh.* Was this blow wanting to complete my ruin?  
Oh! let him go, ye ministers of terror,  
He shall offend no more, for I will die,  
And yield obedience to your cruel master,  
Tarry a little, but a little longer,  
And take my last breath with you.

*Sh.* Oh, my love!

“Why have I liv'd to see this bitter moment,  
“This grief, by far surpassing all my former?”  
Why dost thou fix thy dying eyes upon me,  
With such an earnest, such a piteous look,  
As if thy heart were full of some sad meaning  
Thou could'st not speak?—

*J. Sh.* Forgive me!—but forgive me!

*Sh.* Be witness for me, ye celestial host,

Such mercy and such pardon as my soul  
Accords to thee, and begs of Heav'n to shew thee;  
May such befall me at my latest hour,  
And make my portion bless'd or curs'd for ever.

*J. Sh.* Then all is well, and I shall sleep in peace—  
'Tis very dark, and I have lost you now——  
Was there not something I would have bequeath'd  
you?

But I have nothing left me to bestow,  
Nothing but one sad sigh. Oh! mercy, Heav'n!  
[Dies.

*Bel.* There fled the soul,  
And left her load of misery behind.

*Sh.* Oh, my heart's treasure! Is this pale sad visage  
All that remains of thee? "Are these dead eyes  
"The light that cheer'd my soul?" Oh, heavy hour!  
But I will fix my trembling lips to thine,  
'Till I am cold and senseless quite, as thou art.  
What, must we part then?—will you——

[To the Guards, taking him away.

Fare thee well—— [Kissing her.

Now execute your tyrant's will, and lead me  
To bonds, or death, 'tis equally indifferent.

*Bel.* Let those, who view this sad example, know,  
What fate attends the broken marriage-vow;  
And teach their children, in succeeding times,  
No common vengeance waits upon these crimes,  
When such severe repentance could not save  
From want, from shame, and an untimely grave.

[Exeunt omnes.





## EPILOGUE.

*YE modest matrons all, ye virtuous wives,  
 Who lead, with horrid husbands, decent lives;  
 You, who, for all you are in such a taking,  
 To see your spouses drinking, gaming, raking,  
 Yet make a conscience still of cuckold-making;  
 What can we say your pardon to obtain?  
 This matter here was prov'd against poor Jane:  
 She never once deny'd it; but in short,  
 Whimper'd—and cry'd—"Sweet sir, I'm sorry for't,"  
 'Twas well he met a kind, good-natur'd soul,  
 We are not all so easy to control:  
 I fancy one might find in this good town,  
 Some wou'd ha' told the gentleman his own:  
 Have answer'd smart—"To what do you pretend,  
 " Blockhead?—As if I must not see a friend:  
 " Tell me of hackney coaches—Jaunts to th' city—  
 " Where should I buy my china?—Faith, I'll fit ye"—  
 Our wife was of a milder, meeker spirit;  
 You!—lords and masters!—was not that some merit?  
 Don't you allow it to be virtuous hearing,  
 When we submit thus to your domineering?  
 Well, peace be with her, she did wrong most surely;  
 But so do many more who look demurely.  
 Nor shou'd our mourning madam weep alone,  
 There are more ways of wickedness than one.  
 If the reforming stage should fall to shaming  
 Ill-nature, pride, hypocrisy, and gaming;  
 The poets frequently might move compassion,  
 And with she-tragedies o'er-run the nation.  
 Then judge the fair offender with good-nature,  
 And let your fellow-feeling curb your satire.  
 What, if our neighbours have some little failing,  
 Must we needs fall to damning and to railing?  
 For her excuse too, be it understood,  
 That if the woman was not quite so good,  
 Her lover was a king, she flesh and blood.  
 And since sh' has dearly paid the sinful score,  
 Be kind at last and pity poor Jane Shore.*



TRAGEDY  
OF  
C A T ' O.

BY JOSEPH ADDISON, ESQ.

ADAPTED FOR THEATRICAL REPRESENTATION,

*As performed at the Theatres-Royal,*  
COVENT-GARDEN AND DRURY-LANE.

Regulated from the Prompt Books,

BY PERMISSION OF THE MANAGERS.

WITH THE LIFE OF THE AUTHOR,

BY DR. JOHNSON;

And a Critique,

*By R. CUMBERLAND, Esq.*

The Lines distinguished by inverted Commas are omitted  
in the Representation.

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TO HER ROYAL HIGHNESS THE  
PRINCESS OF WALES,

With the Tragedy of *Cato*, Nov. 1714.

*THE Muse that oft, with sacred raptures fir'd,  
Has gen'rous thoughts of liberty inspir'd,  
And, boldly rising for Britannia's laws,  
Engag'd great Cato in her country's cause,  
On you submissive waits, with hopes assur'd,  
By whom the mighty blessing stands secur'd,  
And all the glories that our age adorn,  
Are promis'd to a people yet unborn.  
No longer shall the widow'd land bemoan  
A broken lineage, and a doubtful throne;  
But boast her royal progeny's increase,  
And count the pledges of her future peace.  
Oh, born to strengthen and to grace our isle!  
While you, fair princess, in your offspring smile,  
Supplying charms to the succeeding age,  
Each heav'nly daughter's triumphs we presage:  
Already see th' illustrious youths complain,  
And pity monarchs doom'd to sigh in vain.  
Thou too, the darling of our fond desires,  
Whom Albion, opening wide her arms, requires.  
With manly valour and attractive air,  
Shall quell the fierce, and captivate the fair.  
Oh, England's younger hope! in whom conspire  
The mother's sweetness and the father's fire;  
For thee, perhaps, ev'n now of kingly race  
Some dawning beauty blooms in ev'ry grace,  
Some Carolina, to Heav'n's dictates true,  
Who, while the scepter'd rivals vainly sue,  
Thy inborn worth with conscious eyes shall see,  
And slight th' imperial diadem for thee.  
Pleas'd with the prospect of successive reigns,  
The tuneful tribe no more in daring strains*

*Shall vindicate, with pious fears oppress,  
Endanger'd rights and liberty distress:  
To milder sounds each Muse shall tune the lyre,  
And gratitude, and faith to kings inspire,  
And filial love; bid impious discord cease,  
And sooth the madd'ning factions into peace;  
Or rise ambitious in more lofty lays,  
And teach the nation their new monarch's praise,  
Describe his awful look, and godlike mind,  
And Cæsar's power with Cato's virtue join'd.  
Meanwhile, bright princess, who, with graceful ease,  
And native majesty, art form'd to please,  
Behold those arts with a propitious eye,  
That suppliant to their great protectress fly;  
Then shall they triumph, and the British stage  
Improve her manners, and refine her rage,  
More noble characters expose to view,  
And draw her finish'd heroines from you.  
Nor you the kind indulgence will refuse,  
Skill'd in the labours of the deathless Muse:  
The deathless Muse, with undiminish'd rays,  
Through distant times the lovely dame conveys,  
To Gloriana Waller's harp was strung;  
The queen still shines, because the poet sung.  
Even all those graces in your frame combin'd,  
The common fate of mortal charms may find;  
(Content our short-liv'd praises to engage,  
The joy and wonder of a single age)  
Unless some poet in a lasting song  
To late posterity their fame prolong,  
Instruct our sons the radiant form to prize,  
And see your beauty with their father's eyes.*

## LIFE OF JOSEPH ADDISON.

JOSEPH ADDISON was born on the 1st of May, 1672, at Milston, (of which his father, Lancelot Addison, was then rector) near Ambrosbury in Wiltshire, and appearing weak and unlikely to live, he was christened the same day. After the usual domestic education, which, from the character of his father, may be reasonably supposed to have given him strong impressions of piety, he was committed to the care of Mr. Naish at Ambrosbury, and afterwards of Mr. Taylor at Salisbury.

Not to name the school or the masters of men illustrious for literature, is a kind of historical fraud, by which honest fame is injuriously diminished: I would therefore trace him through the whole process of his education. In 1683, in the beginning of his twelfth year, his father being made dean of Litchfield, naturally carried his family to his new residence, and, I believe, placed him for some time, probably not long, under Mr. Shaw, then master of the school at Litchfield, father of the late Dr. Peter Shaw. Of this interval his biographers have given no account, and I know it only from a story of a *barring-out*, told me, when I was a boy, by Andrew Corbet of Shropshire, who had heard it from Mr. Pigot his uncle.

At the school of the Chartreux, to which he was removed either from that of Salisbury or Litchfield, he pursued his juvenile studies under the care of Dr. Ellis, and contracted that intimacy with Sir Richard Steele, which their joint labours have so effectually recorded.

Addison, who knew his own dignity, could not always forbear to show it, by playing a little upon his admirer; but he was in no danger of retort: his jests were endured without resistance or resentment.

But the sneer of jocularitv was not the worst.

Steele, whose imprudence of generosity or vanity of profusion kept him always incurably necessitous, upon some pressing exigence, in an evil hour, borrowed an hundred pounds of his friend, probably without much purpose of repayment; but Addison, who seems to have had other notions of a hundred pounds, grew impatient of delay, and reclaimed his loan by an execution. Steele felt with great sensibility the obduracy of his creditor; but with emotions of sorrow rather than of anger.

In 1687 he was entered into Queen's College in Oxford, where, in 1689, the accidental perusal of some Latin verses gained him the patronage of Dr. Lancaster, afterwards provost of Queen's College, by whose recommendation he was elected into Magdalen College as a Demy, a term by which that society denominates those which are elsewhere called Scholars; young men, who partake of the founder's benefaction, and succeed in their order to vacant fellowships\*.

Here he continued to cultivate poetry and criticism, and grew first eminent by his Latin compositions, which are entitled to particular praise. He has not confined himself to the imitation of any ancient author, but has formed his style from the general language, such as a diligent perusal of the productions of different ages happened to supply.

His Latin compositions seem to have had much of his fondness; for he collected a second volume of the *Musæ Anglicanæ*, perhaps for a convenient receptacle, in which all his Latin pieces are inserted, where his Poem on the Peace has the first place. He afterwards presented the collection to Boileau, who, from that time, "conceived," says Tickell, "an opinion of the English genius for poetry." Nothing is better known of Boileau, than that he had an injudicious and peevish contempt of modern Latin, and therefore his profession of regard was probably the effect of his civility rather than approbation.

\* He took the degree of M. A. February 14, 1693.



Three of his Latin poems are upon subjects on which perhaps he would not have ventured to have written in his own language: *The Battle of the Pigmies and Cranes*; *The Barometer*; and *A Bowling-Green*. When the matter is low or scanty, a dead language, in which nothing is mean because nothing is familiar, affords great conveniences; and by the sonorous magnificence of Roman syllables, the writer conceals penury of thought, and want of novelty, often from the reader, and often from himself.

In his twenty-second year he first shewed his power of English poetry, by some verses addressed to Dryden; and soon afterwards published a translation of the greater part of the Fourth Georgic upon Bees; after which, says Dryden, “my latter swarm is hardly  
“worth the hiving.”

About the same time he composed the arguments prefixed to the several books of Dryden’s *Virgil*; and produced an *Essay on the Georgics*, juvenile, superficial, and uninformative, without much either of the scholar’s learning or the critic’s penetration.

His next paper of verses contained a character of the principal English poets, inscribed to Henry Sacheverell, who was then, if not a poet, a writer of verses; as is shewn by his version of a small part of Virgil’s *Georgics*, published in the *Miscellanies*, and a Latin encomium on Queen Mary, in the *Musæ Anglicanæ*. These verses exhibit all the fondness of friendship: but, on one side or the other, friendship was afterwards too weak for the malignity of faction.

In this poem is a very confident and discriminative character of Spenser, whose work he had then never read. So little sometimes is criticism the effect of judgment. It is necessary to inform the reader, that about this time he was introduced by Congreve to Montague, then Chancellor of the Exchequer: Addison was then learning the trade of a courtier, and subjoined Montague as a poetical name to those of Cowley and of Dryden.

In 1695 he wrote a poem to King William, with a

rhyming introduction addressed to Lord Somers. King William had no regard to elegance or literature; his study was only war; yet, by a choice of ministers, whose disposition was very different from his own, he procured, without intention, a very liberal patronage to poetry. Addison was caressed both by Somers and Montague.

In 1697 appeared his Latin verses on the peace of Ryswic, which he dedicated to Montague, and which was afterwards called by Smith, "the best Latin poem since the *Æneid*." Praise must not be too rigorously examined; but the performance cannot be denied to be vigorous and elegant.

Having yet no public employment, he obtained (in 1699) a pension of three hundred pounds a year, that he might be enabled to travel. He staid a year at Blois, probably to learn the French language; and then proceeded in his journey to Italy, which he surveyed with the eyes of a poet.

While he was travelling at leisure, he was far from being idle; for he not only collected his observations on the country, but found time to write his *Dialogues on Medals*, and four acts of *Cato*. Such at least is the relation of Tickell. Perhaps he only collected his materials, and formed his plan.

Whatever were his other employments in Italy, he there wrote the letter to Lord Halifax, which is justly considered as the most elegant, if not the most sublime, of his poetical productions. But in about two years he found it necessary to hasten home; being, as Swift informs us, distressed by indigence, and compelled to become the tutor of a travelling squire, because his pension was not remitted.

When he returned to England (in 1702), with a meanness of appearance which gave testimony of the difficulties to which he had been reduced, he found his old patrons out of power, and was therefore for a time at full leisure for the cultivation of his mind, and a mind so cultivated gives reason to believe that little time was lost.

But he remained not long neglected or useless. The victory at Blenheim (1704) spread triumph and confidence over the nation; and Lord Godolphin lamenting to Lord Halifax, that it had not been celebrated in a manner equal to the subject, desired him to propose it to some better poet. Halifax told him that there was no encouragement for genius; that worthless men were unprofitably enriched with public money, without any care to find or employ those whose appearance might do honour to their country. To this Godolphin replied, that such abuses should in time be rectified; and that if a man could be found capable of the task then proposed, he should not want an ample recompence. Halifax then named Addison; but required that the Treasurer should apply to him in his own person. Godolphin sent the message by Mr. Boyle, afterwards Lord Carleton; and Addison having undertaken the work, communicated it to the Treasurer, while it was yet advanced no farther than the simile of the Angel, and was immediately rewarded by succeeding Mr. Locke in the place of *Commisioner of Appeals*.

In the following year he was at Hanover with Lord Halifax; and the year after was made under-secretary of state, first to Sir Charles Hedges, and in a few months more to the Earl of Sunderland.

About this time the prevalent taste for Italian operas inclined him to try what would be the effect of a musical drama in our own language. He therefore wrote the opera of *Rosamond*, which, when exhibited on the stage was either hissed or neglected; but trusting that the readers would do him more justice, he published it, with an inscription to the Duchess of Marlborough; a woman without skill, or pretensions to skill, in poetry or literature. His dedication was therefore an instance of servile absurdity, to be exceeded only by Joshua Barnes's dedication of a Greek Anacreon to the Duke.

His reputation had been somewhat advanced by the *Tender Husband*, a comedy which Steele dedicated

to him, with a confession that he owed to him several of the most successful scenes. To this play Addison supplied a prologue.

When the Marquis of Wharton was appointed lord lieutenant of Ireland, Addison attended him as his secretary; and was made keeper of the records in Birmingham's Tower, with a salary of three hundred pounds a year. The office was little more than nominal, and the salary was augmented for his accommodation.

He was in Ireland when Steele, without any communication of his design, began the publication of the *Tatler*; but he was not long concealed: by inserting a remark on Virgil, which Addison had given him, he discovered himself. It is indeed not easy for any man to write upon literature, or common life, so as not to make himself known to those with whom he familiarly converses, and who are acquainted with his track of study, his favourite topics, his peculiar notions, and his habitual phrases.

If Steele desired to write in secret, he was not lucky; a single month detected him. His first *Tatler* was published April 22 (1709), and Addison's contribution appeared May 26. Tickell observes, that the *Tatler* began and was concluded without his concurrence. This is doubtless literally true; but the work did not suffer much by his unconsciousness of its commencement, or his absence at its cessation; for he continued his assistance to December 23, and the paper stopped on January 2. He did not distinguish his pieces by any signature; and I know not whether his name was not kept secret, till the papers were collected into volumes.

To the *Tatler*, in about two months, succeeded the *Spectator*; a series of essays of the same kind, but written with less levity, upon a more regular plan, and published daily. Such an undertaking shewed the writers not to distrust their own copiousness of materials, or facility of composition; and their performance justified their confidence. They found,

however, in their progress, many auxiliaries. To attempt a single paper was no terrifying labour: many pieces were offered, and many were received.

Addison had enough of the zeal of party, but Steele had at that time almost nothing else. The *Spectator*, in one of the first papers, shewed the political tenets of its authors; but a resolution was soon taken, of courting general approbation by general topics, and subjects on which faction had produced no diversity of sentiments; such as literature, morality, and familiar life. To this practice they adhered with very few deviations. The ardour of Steele once broke out in praise of Marlborough; and when Dr. Fleetwood prefixed to some sermons a preface, overflowing with Whiggish opinions, that it might be read by the queen, it was reprinted in the *Spectator*.

To teach the minuter decencies and inferior duties, to regulate the practice of daily conversation, to correct those depravities which are rather ridiculous than criminal, and remove those grievances which, if they produce no lasting calamities, impress hourly vexation, was first attempted by Casa in his book of *Manners*, and Castiglione in his *Courtier*, two books yet celebrated in Italy for purity and elegance, and which, if they are now less read, are neglected only because they have effected that reformation which their authors intended, and their precepts now are no longer wanted. Their usefulness to the age in which they were written, is sufficiently attested by the translations which almost all the nations of Europe were in haste to obtain.

This species of instruction was continued, and perhaps advanced, by the French; among whom La Bruyere's *Manners of the Age*, though as Boileau remarked, it is written without connexion, certainly deserves great praise, for liveliness of description and justness of observation.

Before the *Tatler* and *Spectator*, if the writers for the theatre are excepted, England had no masters

of common life. No writers had yet undertaken to reform either the savageness of neglect, or the impertinence of civility; to shew when to speak, or to be silent; how to refuse, or how to comply. We had many books to teach us our more important duties, and to settle opinions in philosophy or politics; but an *Arbiter elegantiarum*, a judge of propriety, was yet wanting, who should survey the track of daily conversation, and free it from thorns and prickles, which tease the passer, though they do not wound him.

For this purpose nothing is so proper as the frequent publication of short papers, which we read not as study but amusement. If the subject be slight, the treatise likewise is short. The busy may find time, and the idle may find patience.

This mode of conveying cheap and easy knowledge began among us in the Civil War, when it was much the interest of either party to raise and fix the prejudices of the people. At that time appeared *Mercurius Aulicus*, *Mercurius Rusticus*, and *Mercurius Civicus*. It is said, that when any title grew popular, it was stolen by the antagonist, who by this stratagem conveyed his notions to those who would not have received him had he not worn the appearance of a friend. The tumult of those unhappy days left scarcely any man leisure to treasure up occasional compositions; and so much were they neglected, that a complete collection is no where to be found.

These *Mercuries* were succeeded by L'Estrange's *Observer*, and that by Lesley's *Rehearsal*, and perhaps by others; but hitherto nothing had been conveyed to the people, in this commodious manner, but controversy relating to the church or state; of which they taught many to talk, whom they could not teach to judge.

It has been suggested that the Royal Society was instituted soon after the Restoration, to divert the attention of the people from public discontent. The *Tatler* and *Spectator* had the same tendency; they



were published at a time when two parties, loud, restless, and violent, each with plausible declarations, and each perhaps without any distinct termination of its views, were agitating the nation; to minds heated with political contest, they supplied cooler and more inoffensive reflections; and it is said by Addison, in a subsequent work, that they had a perceptible influence upon the conversation of that time, and taught the frolic and the gay to unite merriment with decency; an effect which they can never wholly lose, while they continue to be among the first books by which both sexes are initiated in the elegances of knowledge.

The *Tatler* and *Spectator* adjusted, like Casa, the unsettled practice of daily intercourse by propriety and politeness; and, like La Bruyere, exhibited the *Characters and Manners of the Age*. The personages introduced in these papers were not merely ideal; they were then known, and conspicuous in various stations. Of the *Tatler* this is told by Steele in his last paper, and of the *Spectator* by Budgell in the Preface to Theophrastus: a book which Addison has recommended, and which he was suspected to have revised, if he did not write it. Of those portraits, which may be supposed to be sometimes embellished, and sometimes aggravated, the originals are now partly known, and partly forgotten.

But to say that they united the plans of two or three eminent writers, is to give them but a small part of their due praise; they super-added literature and criticism, and sometimes towered far above their predecessors; and taught, with great justness of argument and dignity of language, the most important duties and sublime truths.

All these topics were happily varied with elegant fictions and refined allegories, and illuminated with different changes of style and felicities of invention.

Of essays thus elegant, thus instructive, and thus commodiously distributed, it is natural to suppose the approbation general, and the sale numerous. I once

heard it observed, that the sale may be calculated by the product of the tax, related in the last number to produce more than twenty pounds a week, and therefore stated at one and twenty pounds, or three pounds ten shillings a day : this, at a half-penny a paper, will give sixteen hundred and eighty for the daily number.

This sale is not great ; yet this, if Swift be credited, was likely to grow less ; for he declares that the *Spectator*, whom he ridicules for his endless mention of the *fair sex*, had before his recess wearied his readers.

The next year (1713), in which *Cato* came upon the stage, was the grand climacteric of Addison's reputation. Upon the death of Cato, he had, as is said, planned a tragedy in the time of his travels, and had for several years the four first acts finished, which were shewn to such as were likely to spread their admiration. They were seen by Pope and by Cibber ; who relates that Steele when he took back the copy ; told him, in the despicable cant of literary modesty, that, whatever spirit his friend had shewn in the composition, he doubted whether he would have courage sufficient to expose it to the censure of a British audience,

The time however was now come, when those who affected to think liberty in danger, affected likewise to think that a stage-play might preserve it : and Addison was importuned, in the name of the tutelary deities of Britain, to shew his courage and his zeal by finishing his design.

To resume his work he seemed perversely and unaccountably willing ; and by a request, which perhaps he wished to be denied, desired Mr. Hughes to add a fifth act. Hughes supposed him serious ; and, undertaking the supplement, brought in a few days some scenes for his examination ; but he had in the mean time gone to work himself, and produced half an act, which he afterwards completed, but with brevity irregularly disproportionate to the foregoing

parts; like a task performed with reluctance, and hurried to its conclusion.

It may yet be doubted whether *Cato* was made public by any change of the author's purpose; for Dennis charged him with raising prejudices in his own favour by false positions of preparatory criticism, and with *poisoning the town* by contradicting in the *Spectator* the established rule of poetical justice, because his own hero, with all his virtues, was to fall before a tyrant. The fact is certain; the motives we must guess.

Addison was, I believe, sufficiently disposed to bar all avenues against all danger. When Pope brought him the prologue which is properly accommodated to the play, there were these words, *Britons arise, be worth like this approved*; meaning nothing more than, Britons, erect and exalt yourselves to the approbation of public virtue. Addison was frightened lest he should be thought a promoter of insurrection, and the line was liquidated to *Britons, attend*.

Now, *heavily in clouds, came on the day, the great, the important day*, when Addison was to stand the hazard of the theatre. That there might, however, be left as little to hazard as was possible, on the first night Steele, as himself relates, undertook to pack an audience. This, says Pope, had been tried for the first time in favour of the *Distrest Mother*; and was now, with more efficacy, practised for *Cato*.

The danger was soon over. The whole nation was at that time on fire with faction. The Whigs applauded every line in which liberty was mentioned, as a satire on the Tories; and the Tories echoed every clap, to shew that the satire was unfelt. The story of Bolingbroke is well known. He called Booth to his box, and gave him fifty guineas for defending the cause of liberty so well against a perpetual dictator. The Whigs, says Pope, design a second present, when they can accompany it with as good a sentence.

The play, supported thus by the emulation of fac-

tious praise, was acted night after night for a longer time than, I believe, the public had allowed to any drama before; and the author, as Mrs. Porter long afterwards related, wandered through the whole exhibition behind the scenes with restless and unappeasable solicitude.

When it was printed, notice was given that the Queen would be pleased, if it was dedicated to her; "but as he had designed that compliment elsewhere," he found himself obliged," says Tickell, "by his duty on the one hand, and his honour on the other, to send it into the world without any dedication."

Human happiness has always its abatements; the brightest sun-shine of success is not without a cloud. No sooner was *Cato* offered to the reader, than it was attacked by the acute malignity of Dennis, with all the violence of angry criticism. Dennis, though equally zealous, and probably by his temper more furious than Addison, for what they called liberty, and though a flatterer of the Whig ministry, could not sit quiet at a successful play; but was eager to tell friends and enemies, that they had misplaced their admirations. The world was too stubborn for instruction; with the fate of the censurer of Corneille's *Cid*, his animadversions shewed his anger without effect, and *Cato* continued to be praised.

Pope had now an opportunity of courting the friendship of Addison, by vilifying his old enemy, and could give resentment its full play without appearing to revenge himself. He therefore published *A Narrative of the Madness of John Dennis*; a performance which left the objections to the play in their full force, and therefore discovered more desire of vexing the critic than of defending the poet.

Addison, who was no stranger to the world, probably saw the selfishness of Pope's friendship; and, resolving that he should have the consequences of his officiousness to himself, informed Dennis, by Steele, that he was sorry for the insult; and that whenever

he should think fit to answer his remarks, he would do it in a manner to which nothing could be objected.

The greatest weakness of the play is in the scenes of love, which are said by Pope to have been added to the original plan upon a subsequent review, in compliance with the popular practice of the stage. Such an authority it is hard to reject; yet the love is so intimately mingled with the whole action, that it cannot easily be thought extrinsic and adventitious; for if it were taken away, what would be left? or how were the four acts filled in the first draught?

At the publication, the wits seemed proud to pay their attendance with encomiastic verses. The best are from an unknown hand, which will perhaps lose somewhat of their praise when the author is known to be Jeffreys.

*Cato* had yet other honours. It was censured as a party-play by a *Scholar of Oxford*, and defended in a favourable examination by Dr. Sewel. It was translated by Salvini into Italian, and acted at Florence; and by the Jesuits of St. Omer's into Latin, and played by their pupils. Of this version a copy was sent to Mr. Addison: it is to be wished that it could be found, for the sake of comparing the version of the soliloquy with that of Bland.

A tragedy was written on the same subject by Des Champs, a French poet, which was translated, with a criticism on the English play. But the translator and the critic are now forgotten.

Dennis lived on unanswered, and therefore little read: Addison knew the policy of literature too well to make his enemy important, by drawing the attention of the public upon a criticism, which, though sometimes intemperate, was often irrefragable.

While *Cato* was upon the stage, another daily paper, called *The Guardian*, was published by Steele. To this Addison gave great assistance, whether occasionally, or by previous engagement, is not known.

The character of *Guardian* was too narrow and

too serious: it might properly enough admit both the duties and the decencies of life, but seemed not to include literary speculations, and was in some degree violated by merriment and burlesque. What had the *Guardian* of the Lizards to do with clubs of tall or little men, with nests of ants, or with Strada's Prolusions?

Of this paper nothing is necessary to be said, but that it found many contributors, and that it was a continuation of the *Spectator*, with the same elegance, and the same variety, till some unlucky sparkle from a Tory paper set Steele's politics on fire, and wit at once blazed into faction. He was soon too hot for neutral topics, and quitted the *Guardian* to write the *Englishman*.

The papers of Addison are marked in the *Spectator* by one of the letters in the name of CLIO, and in the *Guardian* by A HAND; whether it was, as Tickell pretends to think, that he was unwilling to usurp the praise of others, or as Steele, with far greater likelihood, insinuates, that he could not without discontent impart to others any of his own. I have heard that his avidity did not satisfy itself with the air of renown, but that with great eagerness he laid hold on his proportion of the profits.

Many of these papers were written with powers truly comic, with nice discrimination of characters, and accurate observation of natural or accidental deviations from propriety; but it was not supposed that he had tried a comedy on the stage, till Steele, after his death, declared him the author of the *Drummer*: this however Steele did not know to be true by any direct testimony; for when Addison put the play into his hands, he only told him, it was the work of a *Gentleman in the Company*; and when it was received, as is confessed with cold disapprobation, he was probably less willing to claim it. Tickell omitted it in his collection; but the testimony of Steele, and the total silence of any other claimant, has determined the public to assign it to Addison, and it is now



printed with his other poetry. Steele carried the *Drummer* to the play-house, and afterwards to the press, and sold the copy for fifty guineas.

To the opinion of Steele may be added the proof supplied by the play itself, of which the characters are such as Addison would have delineated, and the tendency such as Addison would have promoted. That it should have been ill-received would raise wonder, did we not daily see the capricious distribution of theatrical praise.

He was not all this time an indifferent spectator of public affairs. He wrote, as different exigences required, (in 1707) *The present State of the War, and the Necessity of an Augmentation*; which, however judicious, being written on temporary topics, and exhibiting no peculiar powers, has naturally sunk by its own weight into neglect. This cannot be said of the few papers intitled *The Whig Examiner*, in which is exhibited all the force of gay malevolence and humorous satire. Of this paper, which just appeared and expired, Swift remarks, with great exultation, that "it is now down among the dead men." He might well rejoice at the death of that which he could not have killed. Every reader of every party, since personal malice is past, and the papers which once inflamed the nation are read only as effusions of wit, must wish for more of the *Whig Examiners*; for on no occasion was the genius of Addison more vigorously exerted, and on none did the superiority of his wit more evidently appear. His *Trial of Count Tariff*, written to expose the treaty of commerce with France, lived no longer than the question that produced it.

Not long afterwards an attempt was made to revive the *Spectator*, at a time indeed by no means favourable to literature, when the succession of a new family to the throne filled the nation with anxiety, discord, and confusion; and either the turbulence of the times or the satiety of the readers put a stop to the publication, after an experiment of eighty numbers, which

were afterwards collected into an eighth volume, perhaps more valuable than any one of those that went before it : Addison produced more than a fourth part, and the other contributors are by no means unworthy of appearing as his associates. The time that had passed during the suspension of the *Spectator*, though it had not lessened his power of humour, seems to have increased his disposition to seriousness : the proportion of his religious to his comic papers is greater than in the former series.

The *Spectator*, from its re-commencement, was published only three times a week, and no discriminative marks were added to the papers. To Addison Tickell has ascribed twenty-three\*.

The *Spectator* had many contributors ; and Steele, whose negligence kept him always in a hurry, when it was his turn to furnish a paper, called loudly for the letters, of which Addison, whose materials were more, made little use ; having recourse to sketches and hints, the product of his former studies, which he now reviewed and completed : among these are named by Tickell the *Essays on Wit*, those on the *Pleasures of the Imagination*, and the *Criticism on Milton*.

When the House of Hanover took possession of the throne, it was reasonable to expect that the zeal of Addison would be suitably rewarded. Before the arrival of king George he was made secretary to the regency, and was required by his office to send notice to Hanover that the Queen was dead, and that the throne was vacant. To do this would not have been difficult to any man but Addison, who was so overwhelmed with the greatness of the event, and so distracted by choice of expression, that the lords, who could not wait for the niceties of criticism, called Mr. Southwell, a clerk in the house, and ordered him to dispatch the message. Southwell readily told what was necessary, in the common style of business,

\* Nos. 556, 557, 558, 559, 561, 562, 565, 567, 568, 569, 571, 574, 575, 579, 580, 582, 583, 584, 585, 590, 592, 598, 600.

and valued himself upon having done what was too hard for Addison.

He was better qualified for the *Freeholder*, a paper which he published twice a week, from Dec. 23, 1715, to the middle of the next year. This was undertaken in defence of the established government, sometimes with argument, sometimes with mirth. In argument he had many equals; but his humour was singular and matchless. Bigotry itself must be delighted with the Tory Fox-hunter.

There are, however, some strokes less elegant, and less decent; such as the Pretender's Journal, in which one topic of ridicule is his poverty. This mode of abuse had been employed by Milton against King Charles II.

“ ——— Jacobæi

“ *Centum exulantis viscera Marsupii regis.*”

And Oldmixon delights to tell of some alderman of London, that he had more money than the exiled princes; but that which might be expected from Milton's savageness, or Oldmixon's meanness, was not suitable to the delicacy of Addison.

Steele thought the humour of the *Freeholder* too nice and gentle for such noisy times; and is reported to have said, that the ministry made use of a lute, when they should have called for a trumpet.

This year (1716) he married the countess dowager of Warwick, whom he had solicited by a very long and anxious courtship, perhaps with behaviour not very unlike that of Sir Roger to his disdainful widow; and who, I am afraid, diverted herself often by playing with his passion. He is said to have first known her by becoming tutor to her son. “He formed,” said Tonson, “the design of getting that lady, from the time when he was first recommended into the family.” In what part of his life he obtained the recommendation, or how long, and in what manner he lived in the family, I know not. His advances at first were certainly timorous, but grew bolder as his reputation and influence increased; till at last the

lady was persuaded to marry him, on terms much like those on which a Turkish princess is espoused, to whom the Sultan is reported to pronounce, "Daughter, I give thee this man for thy slave." The marriage, if uncontradicted report can be credited, made no addition to his happiness; it neither found them nor made them equal. She always remembered her own rank, and thought herself entitled to treat with very little ceremony the tutor of her son. Rowe's ballad of the *Despairing Shepherd* is said to have been written, either before or after marriage, upon this memorable pair; and it is certain that Addison has left behind him no encouragement for ambitious love.

The year after (1717), he rose to his highest elevation, being made secretary of state. For this employment he might be justly supposed qualified by long practice of business, and by his regular ascent through other offices: but expectation is often disappointed; it is universally confessed that he was unequal to the duties of his place. In the House of Commons he could not speak, and therefore was useless to the defence of the government. In the office, says Pope, he could not issue an order without losing his time in quest of fine expressions. What he gained in rank, he lost in credit; and, finding by experience his own inability, was forced to solicit his dismissal, with a pension of fifteen hundred pounds a year. His friends palliated this relinquishment, of which both friends and enemies knew the true reason, with an account of declining health, and the necessity of recess and quiet.

He now returned to his vocation, and began to plan literary occupations for his future life. He purposed a tragedy on the death of Socrates; a story of which, as Tickell remarks, the basis is narrow, and to which I know not how love could have been appended. There would however have been no want either of virtue in the sentiments, or elegance in the language.

He engaged in a nobler work, a defence of the

*Christian Religion*, of which part was published after his death; and he designed to have made a new poetical version of the Psalms.

These pious compositions Pope imputed to a selfish motive, upon the credit, as he owns, of Tonson; who having quarrelled with Addison, and not loving him, said, that when he laid down the secretary's office, he intended to take orders, and obtain a bishopric; "for," said he, "I always thought him a priest" "in his heart."

That Pope should have thought this conjecture of Tonson worth remembrance is a proof, but indeed so far as I have found, the only proof, that he retained some malignity from their ancient rivalry. Tonson pretended but to guess it; no other mortal ever suspected it; and Pope might have reflected, that a man who had been secretary of state, in the ministry of Sunderland, knew a nearer way to a bishopric than by defending religion, or translating the Psalms.

It is related that he had once a design to make an English Dictionary, and that he considered Dr. Tillotson as the writer of highest authority. There was formerly sent to me by Mr. Locker, clerk of the Leather-sellers Company, who was eminent for curiosity and literature, a collection of examples selected from Tillotson's works, as Locker said, by Addison. It came too late to be of use, so I inspected it but slightly, and remember it indistinctly. I thought the passages too short.

Addison, however, did not conclude his life in peaceful studies; but relapsed, when he was near his end, to a political question.

It so happened that (1718-19) a controversy was agitated, with great vehemence, between those friends of long continuance, Addison and Steele. It may be asked, in the language of Homer, what power or what cause could set them at variance. The subject of their dispute was of great importance. The Earl

of Sunderland proposed an act called the *Peerage Bill*, by which the number of peers should be fixed, and the king restrained from any new creation of nobility, unless when an old family should be extinct. To this the lords would naturally agree; and the king, who was yet little acquainted with his own prerogative, and, as is now well-known, almost indifferent to the possessions of the crown, had been persuaded to consent. The only difficulty was found among the Commons, who were not likely to approve the perpetual exclusion of themselves and their posterity. The bill therefore was eagerly opposed, and among others by Sir Robert Walpole, whose speech was published.

The lords might think their dignity diminished by improper advancements, and particularly by the introduction of twelve new peers at once, to produce a majority of Tories in the last reign; an act of authority violent enough, yet certainly legal, and by no means to be compared with that contempt of national right, with which some time afterwards, by the instigation of Whiggism, the commons, chosen by the people for three years, chose themselves for seven. But, whatever might be the disposition of the lords, the people had no wish to increase their power. The tendency of the bill, as Steele observed in a letter to the Earl of Oxford, was to introduce an aristocracy; for a majority in the House of Lords, so limited, would have been despotic and irresistible.

To prevent this subversion of the ancient establishment, Steele, whose pen readily seconded his political passions, endeavoured to alarm the nation by a pamphlet called the *Plebeian*; to this an answer was published by Addison under the title of the *Old Whig*, in which it is not discovered that Steele was known to be the advocate for the commons. Steele replied by a second *Plebeian*; and, whether by ignorance or by courtesy, confined himself to his question, without any personal notice of his opponent. Nothing



hitherto was committed against the laws of friendship, or proprieties of decency; but controvertists cannot long retain their kindness for each other. The *Old Whig* answered the *Plebeian*, and could not forbear some contempt of little *Dicky*, whose trade it was to write pamphlets. *Dicky* however did not lose his settled veneration for his friend; but contented himself with quoting some lines of *Cato*, which were at once detection and reproof. The bill was laid aside during that session, and Addison died before the next, in which its commitment was rejected by two hundred sixty-five to one hundred seventy-seven.

Every reader surely must regret that these two illustrious friends, after so many years past in confidence and endearment, in unity of interest, conformity of opinion, and fellowship of study, should finally part in acrimonious opposition. Such a controversy was *bellum plusquam civile*, as *Lucan* expresses it. Why could not faction find other advocates? But, among the uncertainties of the human state, we are doomed to number the instability of friendship.

Of this dispute I have little knowledge but from the *Biographia Britannica*. The *Old Whig* is not inserted in Addison's works, nor is it mentioned by *Tickell* in his *Life*; why it was omitted, the biographers doubtless give the true reason; the fact was too recent, and those who had been heated in the contention were not yet cool.

The necessity of complying with times, and of sparing persons, is the great impediment of biography. History may be formed from permanent monuments and records; but Lives can only be written from personal knowledge, which is growing every day less, and in a short time is lost for ever. What is known can seldom be immediately told; and when it might be told, it is no longer known. The delicate features of the mind, the nice discriminations of character, and the minute peculiarities of conduct, are soon obliterated; and it is surely better that caprice, obstinacy, frolic, and folly, however they might delight in the

description, should be silently forgotten, than that, by wanton merriment and unseasonable detection, a pang should be given to a widow, a daughter, a brother, or a friend.

The end of this useful life was now approaching.—Addison had for some time been oppressed by shortness of breath, which was now aggravated by a dropsy; and finding his danger pressing, he prepared to die conformably to his own precepts and professions.

During this lingering decay, he sent, as Pope relates, a message by the Earl of Warwick to Mr. Gay, desiring to see him: Gay, who had not visited him for some time before, obeyed the summons, and found himself received with great kindness. The purpose for which the interview had been solicited was then discovered: Addison told him, that he had injured him; but that, if he recovered, he would recompense him. What the injury was he did not explain, nor did Gay ever know; but supposed that some preferment designed for him had by Addison's intervention been withheld.

Lord Warwick was a young man of very irregular life, and perhaps of loose opinions. Addison, for whom he did not want respect, had very diligently endeavoured to reclaim him; but his arguments and expostulations had no effect: one experiment, however, remained to be tried. When he found his life near its end, he directed the young lord to be called; and when he desired, with great tenderness, to hear his last injunctions, told him, *I have sent for you that you might see how a Christian can die.* What effect this awful scene had on the earl I know not; he died himself in a short time.

In Tickell's excellent Elegy on his friend are these lines:

“ He taught us how to live; and, oh! too high

“ The price of knowledge, taught us how to die.”

In which he alludes to this moving interview, as he told Dr. Young, to whom he related it.

Having given directions to Mr. Tickell for the pub-

lication of his works, and dedicated them on his death-bed to his friend Mr. Craggs, he died June 17, 1719, at Holland-house, leaving no child but a daughter.

Of his virtue it is a sufficient testimony, that the resentment of party has transmitted no charge of any crime. He was not one of those who are praised only after death; for his merit was so generally acknowledged, that Swift, having observed that his election passed without a contest, adds, that if he had proposed himself for king, he would hardly have been refused. His zeal for his party did not extinguish his kindness for the merit of his opponents: when he was secretary in Ireland, he refused to intermit his acquaintance with Swift.

Of his habits, or external manners, nothing is so often mentioned as that timorous or sullen taciturnity, which his friends called modesty by too mild a name. Steele mentions with great tenderness, "that remarkable bashfulness, which is a cloak that hides and muffles merit," and tells us, that "his abilities were covered only by modesty, which doubles the beauties which are seen, and gives credit and esteem to all that are concealed." Chesterfield affirms, that "Addison was the most timorous and awkward man that he ever saw." And Addison, speaking of his own deficiency in conversation, used to say of himself, that, with respect to intellectual wealth, "he could draw bills for a thousand pounds, though he had not a guinea in his pocket."

That he wanted current coin for ready payment, and by that want was often obstructed and distressed; that he was oppressed by an improper and ungraceful timidity, every testimony concurs to prove; but Chesterfield's representation is doubtless hyperbolic. That man cannot be supposed very unexpert in the arts of conversation and practice of life, who, without fortune or alliance, by his usefulness and dexterity, became secretary of state; and who died at forty-seven, after having not only stood long in the highest

rank of wit and literature, but filled one of the most important offices of state.

The time in which he lived had reason to lament his obstinacy of silence; "for he was," says Steele, "above all men in that talent called humour, and enjoyed it in such perfection, that I have often reflected, after a night spent with him apart from all the world, that I had had the pleasure of conversing with an intimate acquaintance of Terence and Catullus, who had all their wit and nature, heightened with humour more exquisite and delightful than any other man ever possessed." This is the fondness of a friend; let us hear what is told us by a rival. "Addison's conversation," says Pope, "had something in it more charming than I have found in any other man. But this was only when familiar: before strangers, or perhaps a single stranger, he preserved his dignity by a stiff silence."

This modesty was by no means inconsistent with a very high opinion of his own merit. He demanded to be the first name in modern wit; and, with Steele to echo him, used to depreciate Dryden, whom Pope and Congreve defended against them. There is no reason to doubt that he suffered too much pain from the prevalence of Pope's poetical reputation; nor is it without strong reason suspected, that by some dissingenuous acts he endeavoured to obstruct it: Pope was not the only man whom he insidiously injured, though the only man of whom he could be afraid.

His own powers were such as might have satisfied him with conscious excellence. Of very extensive learning he has indeed given no proofs. He seems to have had small acquaintance with the sciences, and to have read little except Latin and French; but of the Latin poets his *Dialogues on Medals* shew that he had perused the works with great diligence and skill. The abundance of his own mind left him little need of adventitious sentiments; his wit always could suggest what the occasion demanded. He had read

with critical eyes the important volume of human life, and knew the heart of man from the depths of stratagem to the surface of affectation.

What he knew he could easily communicate. "This," says Steele, "was particular in this writer, that, when he had taken his resolution, or made his plan for what he designed to write, he would walk about a room, and dictate it into language with as much freedom and ease as any one could write it down, and attend to the coherence and grammar of what he dictated."

Pope, who can be less suspected of favouring his memory, declares that he wrote very fluently, but was slow and scrupulous in correcting; that many of his *Spectators* were written very fast, and sent immediately to the press; and that it seemed to be for his advantage not to have time for much revisal.

Of the course of Addison's familiar day, before his marriage, Pope has given a detail. He had in the house with him Budgell, and perhaps Philips. His chief companions were Steele, Budgell, Philips, Carey, Davenant, and Colonel Brett. With one or other of these he always breakfasted. He studied all morning: then dined at a tavern, and went afterwards to Button's.

Button had been a servant in the Countess of Warwick's family, who, under the patronage of Addison, kept a coffee-house on the south side of Russel-street, about two doors from Covent-garden. Here it was that the wits of that time used to assemble. It is said, that when Addison had suffered any vexation from the countess, he withdrew the company from Button's house.

From the coffee-house he went again to a tavern, where he often sat late, and drank too much wine. In the bottle, discontent seeks for comfort, cowardice for courage, and bashfulness for confidence. It is not unlikely that Addison was first seduced to excess by the manumission which he obtained from the servile timidity of his sober hours. He that feels oppres-

sion from the presence of those to whom he knows himself superior, will desire to set loose his powers of conversation; and who, that ever asked succour from Bacchus, was able to preserve himself from being enslaved by his auxiliary?

From any minute knowledge of his familiar manners, the intervention of sixty years has now debarred us. Steele once promised Congreve and the public a complete description of his character; but the promises of authors are like the vows of lovers. Steele thought no more on his design, or thought on it with anxiety that at last disgusted him, and left his friend in the hands of Tickell.

His works will supply some information. It appears from his various pictures of the world, that, with all his bashfulness, he had conversed with many distinct classes of men, had surveyed their ways with very diligent observation, and marked with great acuteness the effects of different modes of life. He was a man in whose presence nothing reprehensible was out of danger; quick in discerning whatever was wrong or ridiculous, and not unwilling to expose it. "There are," says Steele, "in his writings many oblique strokes upon some of the wittiest men of the age." His delight was more to excite merriment than detestation, and he detects follies rather than crimes.

If any judgment be made, from his books, of his moral character, nothing will be found but purity and excellence. Knowledge of mankind indeed, less extensive than that of Addison, will shew, that to write and to live are very different. Many who praise virtue, do no more than praise it. Yet it is reasonable to believe that Addison's professions and practice were at no great variance, since, amidst that storm of faction in which most of his life was passed, though his station made him conspicuous, and his activity made him formidable, the character given him by his friends was never contradicted by his enemies: of those with whom interest or opinion united him,



he had not only the esteem, but the kindness; and of others, whom the violence of opposition drove against him, though he might lose the love, he retained the reverence.

It is justly observed by Tickell, that he employed wit on the side of virtue and religion. He not only made the proper use of wit himself, but taught it to others; and from his time it has been generally subservient to the cause of reason and of truth. He has dissipated the prejudice that had long connected gaiety with vice, and easiness of manners with laxity of principles. He has restored virtue to its dignity, and taught innocence not to be ashamed. This is an elevation of literary character, *above all Greek, above all Roman fame*. No greater felicity can genius attain than that of having purified intellectual pleasure, separated mirth from indecency, and wit from licentiousness; of having taught a succession of writers to bring elegance and gaiety to the aid of goodness: and, if I may use expressions yet more awful, of having *turned many to righteousness*.

Addison, in his life, and for some time afterwards, was considered by the greater part of readers as supremely excelling both in poetry and criticism. Part of his reputation may be probably ascribed to the advancement of his fortune: when, as Swift observes, he became a statesman, and saw poets waiting at his levee, it is no wonder that praise was accumulated upon him. Much likewise may be more honourably ascribed to his personal character, he who, if he had claimed it, might have obtained the diadem, was not likely to be denied the laurel.

But time quickly puts an end to artificial and accidental fame; and Addison is to pass through futurity protected only by his genius. Every name which kindness or interest once raised too high, is in danger, lest the next age should, by the vengeance of criticism, sink it in the same proportion. A great writer has lately styled him *an indifferent poet, and a worse critic*.

His poetry is first to be considered; of which it must be confessed, that it has not often those felicities of diction which give lustre to sentiments, or that vigour of sentiment that animates diction: there is little of ardour, vehemence, or transport; there is very rarely the awfulness of grandeur, and not very often the splendour of elegance. He thinks justly; but he thinks faintly. This is his general character; to which, doubtless, many single passages will furnish exceptions.

Yet, if he seldom reaches supreme excellence, he rarely sinks into dulness, and is still more rarely entangled in absurdity. He did not trust his powers enough to be negligent. There is in most of his compositions a calmness and equability, deliberate and cautious, sometimes with little that delights, but seldom with any thing that offends.

Of this kind seem to be his poems to Dryden, to Somers, and to the king. His ode on St. Cecilia has been imitated by Pope, and has something in it of Dryden's vigour. Of his account of the English Poets, he used to speak as a *poor thing*; but it is not worse than his usual strain. He has said, not very judiciously, in his character of Waller,

“ Thy verse could shew ev’n Cromwell’s innocence,

“ And compliment the storms that bore him hence.

“ O! had thy Muse not come an age too soon,

“ But seen great Nassau on the British throne,

“ How had his triumph glitter’d in thy page!—

What is this but to say that he who could compliment Cromwell had been the proper poet for king William? Addison, however, never printed the piece.

The *Letter from Italy* has been always praised, but has never been praised beyond its merit. It is more correct, with less appearance of labour, and more elegant, with less ambition of ornament, than any other of his poems. There is, however, one broken metaphor, of which notice may properly be taken:

“ —Fir'd with that name—

“ I bridle in my struggling Muse with pain,

“ That longs to launch into a nobler strain.”

To *bridle* a *goddess* is no very delicate idea; but why must she be *bridled*? because she *longs to launch*; an act which was never hindered by a *bridle*: and whither will she *launch*? into a *nobler strain*. She is in the first line a *horse*, in the second a *boat*; and the care of the poet is to keep his *horse* or his *boat* from *singing*.

The next composition is the far-famed *Campaign*, which Dr. Warton has termed a *Gazette in rhyme*, with harshness not often used by the good-nature of his criticism. Before a censure so severe is admitted, let us consider that war is a frequent subject of poetry, and then enquire who has described it with more justness and force. Many of our own writers tried their powers upon this year of victory, yet Addison's is confessedly the best performance; his poem is the work of a man not blinded by the dust of learning: his images are not borrowed merely from books. The superiority which he confers upon his hero is not personal prowess, and *mighty lone*, but deliberate intrepidity, a calm command of his passions, and the power of consulting his own mind in the midst of danger. The rejection and contempt of fiction is rational and manly.

It may be observed that the last line is imitated by Pope:

“ Marlborough's exploits appear divinely bright—

“ Rais'd of themselves, their genuine charms they

“ boast,

“ And those that paint them truest, praise them

“ most.”

This Pope had in his thoughts; but, not knowing how to use what was not his own, he spoiled the thought when he had borrowed it:

“ The well sung woes shall soothe my ghost;

“ He best can paint them, who shall feel them most.”

Martial exploits may be *painted*: perhaps *woes* may

be *painted*; but they are surely not *painted* by being *well sung*: it is not easy to paint in song or to sing in colours.

No passage in the *Campaign* has been more often mentioned than the simile of the Angel, which is said in the *Tatler* to be *one of the noblest thoughts that ever entered into the mind of man*, and is therefore worthy of attentive consideration. Let it be first enquired whether it be a simile. A poetical simile is the discovery of likeness between two actions, in their general nature dissimilar, or of causes terminating by different operations in some resemblance of effect. But the mention of another like consequence from a like cause, or of a like performance by a like agency, is not a simile, but an exemplification. It is not a simile to say that the Thames waters fields, as the Po waters fields; or that as Hecla vomits flames in Iceland, so *Ætna* vomits flames in Sicily. When Horace says of Pindar, that he pours his violence and rapidity of verse, as a river swoln with rain rushes from the mountain; or of himself, that his genius wanders in quest of poetical decorations, as the bee wanders to collect honey; he, in either case, produces a simile; the mind is impressed with the resemblance of things generally unlike, as unlike as intellect and body. But if Pindar had been described as writing with the copiousness and grandeur of Homer, or Horace had told that he reviewed and finished his own poetry with the same care as Isocrates polished his orations, instead of similitude he would have exhibited almost identity; he would have given the same portraits with different names. In the poem now examined, when the English are represented as gaining a fortified pass, by repetition of attack and perseverance of resolution; their obstinacy of courage, and vigour of onset is well illustrated by the sea that breaks, with incessant battery, the dykes of Holland. This is a simile: but when Addison, having celebrated the beauty of Marlborough's person, tells us that *Achilles thus was form'd with every*

*grace*, here is no simile, but a mere exemplification. A simile may be compared to lines converging at a point, and is more excellent as the lines approach from greater distance: an exemplification may be considered as two parallel lines which run on together without approximation, never far separated, and never joined.

The opera of *Rosamond*, though it is seldom mentioned, is one of the first of Addison's compositions. The subject is well chosen, the fiction is pleasing, and the praise of Marlborough, for which the scene gives an opportunity, is, what perhaps every human excellence must be, the product of good luck improved by genius. The thoughts are sometimes great, and sometimes tender; the versification is easy and gay. There is doubtless some advantage in the shortness of the lines, which there is little temptation to load with expletive epithets. The dialogue seems commonly better than the songs. The two comic characters of Sir Trusty and Grideline, though of no great value, are yet such as the poet intended. Sir Trusty's account of the death of *Rosamond* is, I think, too grossly absurd. The whole drama is airy and elegant; engaging in its process, and pleasing in its conclusion. If Addison had cultivated the lighter parts of poetry, he would probably have excelled.

The tragedy of *Cato*, which, contrary to the rule observed in selecting the works of other poets, has by the weight of its character forced its way into the late collection, is unquestionably the noblest production of Addison's genius. Of a work so much read, it is difficult to say any thing new. About things on which the public thinks long, it commonly attains to think right; and of *Cato* it has been not unjustly determined, that it is rather a poem in dialogue than a drama, rather a succession of just sentiments in elegant language, than a representation of natural affections, or of any state probable or possible in human life. Nothing here *excites or assuages emotion*; here is *no magical power of raising phantastic terror or wild*

*anxiety.* The events are expected without solicitude, and are remembered without joy or sorrow. Of the agents we have no care: we consider not what they are doing, or what they are suffering; we wish only to know what they have to say. Cato is a being above our solicitude; a man of whom the gods take care, and whom we leave to their care with heedless confidence. To the rest, neither gods nor men can have much attention; for there is not one amongst them that strongly attracts either affection or esteem. But they are made the vehicles of such sentiments and such expression, that there is scarcely a scene in the play which the reader does not wish to impress upon his memory.

When *Cato* was shewn to Pope, he advised the author to print it, without any theatrical exhibition; supposing that it would be read more favourably than heard. Addison declared himself of the same opinion; but urged the importunity of his friends for its appearance on the stage. The emulation of parties made it successful beyond expectation, and its success has introduced or confirmed among us the use of dialogue too declamatory, of unassuming elegance, and chill philosophy.

The universality of applause, however it might quell the censure of common mortals, had no other effect than to harden Dennis in fixed dislike; but his dislike was not merely capricious. He found and shewed many faults; he shewed them indeed with anger, but he found them with acuteness, such as ought to rescue his criticism from oblivion; though, at last, it will have no other life than it derives from the work which it endeavours to oppress.

There is, as Dryden expresses it, perhaps *too much horse-play in his raillery*; but if his jests are coarse, his arguments are strong. Yet as we love better to be pleased than to be taught, *Cato* is read, and the critic is neglected.

Of Addison's smaller poems, no particular mention is necessary; they have little that can employ or re-



quire a critic. The parallel of the princes and gods, in his verses to Kneller, is often happy, but it is too well known to be quoted.

His translations, so far as I have compared them, want the exactness of a scholar. That he understood his authors cannot be doubted; but his versions will not teach others to understand them, being too licentiously paraphrastical. They are however, for the most part, smooth and easy; and, what is the first excellence of a translator, such as may be read with pleasure by those who do not know the originals.

His poetry is polished and pure; the product of a mind too judicious to commit faults, but not sufficiently vigorous to attain excellence. He has sometimes a striking line or a shining paragraph; but in the whole he is warm rather than fervid, and shews more dexterity than strength. He was however one of our earliest examples of correctness.

The versification which he had learned from Dryden, he debased rather than refined. His rhymes are often dissonant; in his Georgic he admits broken lines. He uses both triplets and alexandrines, but triplets more frequently in his translations than his other works. The mere structure of verses seems never to have engaged much of his care. But his lines are very smooth in *Rosamond*, and too smooth in *Cato*.

Addison is now to be considered as a critic; a name which the present generation is scarcely willing to allow him. His criticism is condemned as tentative or experimental, rather than scientific, and he is considered as deciding by taste rather than by principles.

It is not uncommon for those who have grown wise by the labour of others, to add a little of their own, and overlook their masters. Addison is now despised by some who perhaps would never have seen his defects, but by the lights which he afforded them. That he always wrote as he would think it necessary to write now, cannot be affirmed; his instructions

were such as the character of his readers made proper. That general knowledge which now circulates in common talk, was in his time rarely to be found. Men not professing learning were not ashamed of ignorance; and in the female world, any acquaintance with books was distinguished only to be censured. His purpose was to infuse literary curiosity, by gentle and unsuspected conveyance, into the gay, the idle, and the wealthy; he therefore presented knowledge in the most alluring form, not lofty and austere, but accessible and familiar. When he shewed them their defects, he shewed them likewise that they might be easily supplied. His attempt succeeded; enquiry was awakened, and comprehension expanded. An emulation of intellectual elegance was excited, and from his time to our own, life has been gradually exalted, and conversation purified and enlarged.

Dryden had, not many years before, scattered criticism over his prefaces with very little parsimony; but though he sometimes condescended to be somewhat familiar, his manner was in general too scholastic for those who had yet their rudiments to learn, and found it not easy to understand their master. His observations were framed rather for those that were learning to write, than for those who read only to talk.

An instructor like Addison was now wanting, whose remarks being superficial, might be easily understood, and being just, might prepare the mind for more attainments. Had he presented *Paradise Lost* to the public with all the pomp of system and severity of science, the criticism would perhaps have been admired, and the poem still have been neglected; but by the blandishments of gentleness and facility, he has made Milton an universal favourite, with whom readers of every class think it necessary to be pleased.

He descended now and then to lower disquisitions; and by a serious display of the beauties of *Chevy Chase*, exposed himself to the ridicule of Wagstaff, who bestowed a like pompous character on *Tom*

*Thumb*; and to the contempt of Dennis, who, considering the fundamental position of his criticism, that *Chevy Chase* pleases, and ought to please, because it is natural, observes, " that there is a way of deviating from nature, by bombast or tumour, which soars above nature, and enlarges images beyond their real bulk ; by affectation, which forsakes nature in quest of something unsuitable; and by imbecility, which degrades nature by faintness and diminution, by obscuring its appearances, and weakening its effects." In *Chevy Chase* there is not much of either bombast or affectation; but there is chill and lifeless imbecility. The story cannot possibly be told in a manner that shall make less impression on the mind.

Before the profound observers of the present race repose too securely on the consciousness of their superiority to Addison, let them consider his *Remarks on Ovid*, in which may be found specimens of criticism sufficiently subtle and refined; let them peruse likewise his *Essays on Wit*, and on the *Pleasures of Imagination*, in which he founds art on the base of nature, and draws the principles of invention from dispositions inherent in the mind of man, with skill and elegance, such as his contemners will not easily attain.

As a describer of life and manners, he must be allowed to stand perhaps the first of the first rank. His humour, which, as Steele observes, is peculiar to himself, is so happily diffused as to give the grace of novelty to domestic scenes and daily occurrences. He never *outsteps the modesty of nature*, nor raises merriment or wonder by the violation of truth. His figures neither divert by distortion, nor amaze by aggravation. He copies life with so much fidelity, that he can be hardly said to invent; yet his exhibitions have an air so much original, that it is difficult to suppose them not merely the product of imagination.

As a teacher of wisdom, he may be confidently

followed. His religion has nothing in it enthusiastic or superstitious: he appears neither weakly credulous, nor wantonly sceptical; his morality is neither dangerously lax, nor impracticably rigid. All the enchantment of fancy, and all the cogency of argument, are employed to recommend to the reader his real interest, the care of pleasing the Author of his being. Truth is shewn sometimes as the phantom of a vision, sometimes appears half-veiled in an allegory; sometimes attracts regard in the robes of fancy, and sometimes steps forth in the confidence of reason. She wears a thousand dresses, and in all is pleasing..

“ *Mille habet ornatus, mille decenter habet.*”

His prose is the model of the middle style; on grave subjects not formal, on light occasions not grovelling; pure without scrupulosity, and exact without apparent elaboration; always equable, and always easy, without glowing words or pointed sentences. Addison never deviates from his track to snatch a grace; he seeks no ambitious ornaments, and tries no hazardous innovations. His page is always luminous, but never blazes in unexpected splendour.

It seems to have been his principal endeavour to avoid all harshness and severity of diction; he is therefore sometimes verbose in his transitions and connections, and sometimes descends too much to the language of conversation; yet if his language had been less idiomatical, it might have lost somewhat of its genuine Anglicism. What he attempted, he performed; he is never feeble, and he did not wish to be energetic; he is never rapid, and he never stagnates. His sentences have neither studied amplitude, nor affected brevity: his periods, though not diligently rounded, are voluble and easy. Whoever wishes to attain an English style, familiar but not coarse, and elegant but not ostentatious, must give his days and nights to the volumes of Addison.

# CRITIQUE

## ON THE

### TRAGEDY OF CATO.

IT is not always (I won't say it is not often) that the private character of the author ought to be a motive with the critic for reviewing his works with more than the common candour which is due to all men. Mr. Addison, however, is so high in moral reputation, and the distant commencement of my life approached so near in time to the exemplary conclusion of his, that I wish I could either consistently avoid saying any thing of *Cato*, or conscientiously persuade myself I had nothing to say of it but in its praise.

No man was more careful of his literary fame than Mr. Addison; and as he committed himself very sparingly to the drama, there is every reason to believe, that he took due deliberation in his choice of a subject for his tragedy, and he chose the death of *Cato*, —the *Catonis nobile lethum*. His hero was a rigid philosopher, a zealous patriot, and a martyr in the cause of freedom. This at least is his historical character; but with that I have nothing to do: I am only concerned with him as the hero of a play, and with Mr. Addison only as the writer of it; and I am compelled to say, that in my opinion it is a very ill-chosen subject, a very undramatic catastrophe, and a very false exceptionable moral. Had he represented his hero uniformly as a Stoic, there would have been no violation of character in his killing himself: upon Roman principles it might have passed, though even then it would not have been a judicious choice on the part of Mr. Addison to make it the great incident in his catastrophe. But when he introduces Cato sitting in a thoughtful attitude with Plato in his hand, and his sword ready drawn for self-destruction on the table, he reduces himself to a very ridiculous dilemma be-

tween what he calls his *bane* and *antidote*; whilst the result of this serious meditation turns out to be that of choosing the *evil*, and rejecting the *good*; for that I presume is the English of *bane* and *antidote*. He allows that Plato reasons well, and agrees with him as to the doctrine of the soul's immortality; yet when he debates the point between the sword and the book, he says—

“ This in a moment brings me to my end,

“ But this informs me I shall never die.”

Now if Cato was convinced that he could never die, I am at a loss to think how any thing could momentarily bring him to his end; especially as the last line in the couplet, by the construction of it, ties him down to the meaning of the soul's death, or annihilation, in both instances. In the meantime, to shew the full conviction in Cato's mind, that Plato's reasoning had converted him, the author makes him go on to say,

“ The soul, secur'd in her existence, smiles

“ At the drawn dagger, and defies its point.

“ The stars shall fade away, the sun himself

“ Grow dim with age, and nature sink in years;

“ But *thou* shalt flourish in immortal youth,

“ Unhurt amidst the war of elements,

“ The wreck of matter, and the crush of worlds.”

It is rather singular, that Mr. Addison should give these sentiments to his philosophical hero within a few minutes of his falling upon that sword, which he stigmatizes as his *bane*.

I have quoted the whole passage, because they are so apposite a specimen of the dilated style, which he makes use of through the whole of this play. The five last lines have a sound; but as to substance, they are wire-drawn and attenuated to a state of absolute consumption. Instances of the like sort will occur to the reader in almost every page; the periods are in general loaded with a weight of words, but not of weighty words.



The opening scene between the brothers is very ill-written, and even worse conceived; for the conduct of it is positively ridiculous. There is an attempt at contrast; but Marcus's patriotism evaporates in love, and Portius's philosophy in cunning. Were "but his Lucia kind," Marcus would not be so very furious in the cause of liberty; and were not Portius his rival, he would not be so very earnest in reasoning Marcus out of his love for her.

Sempronius comes in to tell us that

"Conspiracies no sooner should be form'd  
"Than executed."

which is a new doctrine, and would oblige us to find a new name for Sempronius's plots, if they required no time in ripening; yet he seems to retract his opinion in the next line, and says,

"——I must dissemble,  
"And speak a language foreign to my heart."

It seems he is in love with Marcia, and has been rejected by her father:

"Cato has us'd me ill; he has refus'd  
"His daughter Marcia to my ardent vows."

He gives us plain matter of fact in language quite as plain as prose ought to have been, if he had condescended to make use of it—Cato had "us'd him ill," and Syphax comes in very opportunely to tell him,

"I've sounded my Numidians, *man by man*,  
"And find them ripe for a revolt."

A very extraordinary instance of precision in canvassing a whole army, and draws from Sempronius a very natural remark,

"Believe me, Syphax, there's no time to waste."

A point so very clear, that it seems rather unnecessary for Sempronius to waste so much time in explaining to him why there is no time to spare. Yet after all his arguments against delay, he advises him to undertake what is likely to involve a great deal more delay.

“ Once more, be sure *to try thy skill* on Juba :

“ Be sure to press upon him every motive.”

Sempronius has again fallen into his prose; and Syphax, after having seduced every soldier in his sovereign's army, “ man by man,” is now about to undertake the seduction of Juba :

“ I'll try if yet I can reduce to reason

“ This headstrong youth, and make him spurn at  
“ Cato.”

In this “ trial of skill,” which Syphax takes in hand, there seems something that resembles contradiction; for though it may be easy to make a “ headstrong youth spurn at Cato,” yet as he proposes to “ reduce him to reason at the same time,” I should doubt if he can do both. But Juba is in love with Marcia, and, being favoured, has as much reason for befriending Cato, as Sempronius, being rejected, has for betraying him.

The scene between Marcia and Lucia, which concludes the act, has so little of the character of tragedy in it, that to save some appearance of what it does not possess, the prompter has been obliged to cut it very nearly out.

In the second act Cato makes his appearance, and holds a short council upon the question of war or peace, which question Sempronius and Lucius divide between them; and Cato, who seems to relish the advice of neither, but proposes nothing that has any allusion to generalship, or even common precaution, resolves

“ To wait at least till Cæsar's near approach

“ Force us to yield.”

But when this near approach, which seems to be the only thing wanting to decide for a surrender, is instantly announced by the arrival of Decius, he rejects every overture, and insists upon Cæsar's *yielding* himself up to him, for which he is pleased to say—

“ Myself will mount the rostrum in his favour,

“ And strive to gain his pardon from the people.”

To this proposal Decius's instructions do not extend, and after a little altercation he departs with an observation—

“ —When I relate hereafter

“ The tale of this unhappy embassy,

“ All Rome will be in tears.”

This I conceive to be a compliment to the tender hearts of the people of Rome, which in this period of their history they did not quite deserve.

The third act presents us with an insurrection, contrived and executed by Sempronius, in a style which perhaps is more decidedly irreconcilable to nature and common sense, than any insurrection which the British stage ever represented. I did suspect that Sempronius's idea, that “conspiracies should be no sooner  
“ form'd than executed,” was not strictly correct; but his conduct of this exceeds all the expectations that could be founded upon that idea, whatever credit might be given him for the absurdity of it. Cato being a very bad general, though an excellent philosopher, Sempronius escapes detection, by ordering the tongues of his accomplices to be plucked out before they could give their evidence, and impeach him. This was a bold expedient truly on the part of our poet, but I would advise no future poet ever to resort to it.

In the fourth act Sempronius, still fertile in conspiracies, starts one, that has not the objection of lying by too long, but is quite fresh, and with as little forethought in it as can be wished for: he dresses himself in a Numidian dress, takes a parcel of Numidian guards, and, personating Juba, attempts an *enlevement* of Marcia. He falls in with Juba, who single-handed takes all his guards, and kills Sempronius on the spot, who has only time to vent the following natural wish:

“ Oh, for a peal of thunder, that would make

“ Earth, sea, and air, and Heav'n, and Cato,

“ tremble!”

Bravo, poet! if that is not tragedy, what is it? If the gods did not gratify Sempronius with this agreeable peal of thunder, I hope the audience gave him something that resembled it; which, if it did not make "Cato tremble," could hardly fail to make any author less steady than Mr. Addison tremble for him.

The fifth act opens with Cato's soliloquy, after which he is very much dispos'd to fall asleep—

"My soul is quite weigh'd down with care, and asks  
"The soft refreshment of a moment's sleep."

The "moment's sleep" lasts through the rest of the act, till a groan announces his death; and as the unity of the scene is not to be disturbed, the dying man is brought in, and having the business of the play to settle, is occupied in matching his son with Lucia, and his daughter with Juba; observing to the latter, as an apology for his condescending to an alliance with a Numidian—

"But Cæsar's arms have thrown down all distinction;

"Whoe'er is brave and virtuous is a Roman."

Which is an inference that by no means follows from the premises; for "when all distinctions are thrown down," it would be singular, if the highest of all distinctions were left standing.

Having settled these affairs, he seems impatient for death, yet there is a beam of light breaks in upon his soul, which seems to announce something consolatory; but in this we are disappointed, as it only produces a reflection of the melancholy cast:

"——Alas! I fear

"I've been too hasty—Oh, ye Powers, that search

"The heart of man, and weigh his inmost thoughts,

"If I have done amiss, impute it not!

"The best may err; but you are good, and—Oh!"

Thus dies Cato; and the British Muse has sung his requiem, never more to be disturbed.

C.

## PROLOGUE.

WRITTEN BY MR. POPE.

*TO wake the soul by tender strokes of art,  
To raise the genius, and to mend the heart,  
To make mankind in conscious virtue bold,  
Live o'er each scene, and be what they behold:  
For this the Tragic Muse first trod the stage;  
Commanding tears to stream through every age;  
Tyrants no more their savage nature kept,  
And foes to virtue wonder'd how they wept.  
Our author shuns by vulgar springs to move  
The hero's glory, or the virgin's love;  
In pitying love we but our weakness show,  
And wild ambition well deserves its woe.  
Here tears shall flow from a more gen'rous cause,  
Such tears as patriots shed for dying laws:  
He lids your breasts with ancient ardour rise,  
And calls forth Roman drops from British eyes.  
Virtue confess'd in human shape he draws,  
What Plato thought, and god-like Cato was:  
No common object to your sight displays,  
But what with pleasure Heav'n itself surveys;  
A brave man struggling in the storms of fate,  
And greatly falling in a falling state!  
While Cato gives his little senate laws,  
What bosom beats not in his country's cause?  
Who sees him act but envies ev'ry deed?  
Who hears him groan, and does not wish to bleed?  
Ev'n when proud Cæsar, 'midst triumphal cars,  
The spoils of nations, and the pomp of wars,  
Ignobly vain, and impotently great,  
Shew'd Rome her Cato's figure drawn in state;  
As her dead father's rev'rend image past,  
The pomp was darken'd, and the day o'ercast,  
The triumph ceas'd—tears gush'd from ev'ry eye,  
The world's great victor pass'd unheeded by:  
Her last good man dejected Rome ador'd,  
And honour'd Cæsar's less than Cato's sword.*

*Britons, attend: be worth like this approv'd,  
 And shew you have the virtue to be mov'd.  
 With honest scorn the first fam'd Cato view'd  
 Rome learning arts from Greece whom she subdued;  
 Our scenes precariously subsist too long  
 On French translation, and Italian song:  
 Dare to have sense yourselves; assert the stage;  
 Be justly warm'd with your own native rage:  
 Such plays alone should please a British ear,  
 As Cato's self had not disdain'd to hear.*



# DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

## *Men.*

CATO.

LUCIUS,

SEMPRONIUS,

} *Senators.*

JUBA, *Prince of Numidia.*

SYPHAX, *General of the Numidians.*

PORTIUS,

MARCUS,

} *Sons of Cato.*

DECIUS, *Ambassador from Cæsar.*

*Mutineers, Guards, &c.*

## *Women.*

MARCIA, *Daughter to Cato.*

LUCIA, *Daughter to Lucius.*

SCENE, *A Hall in the Governor's Palace in Utica.*



# C A T O.

## ACT I. SCENE I.

*Enter* PORTIUS and MARCUS.

*Portius.* THE dawn is overcast, the morning low'rs,  
And heavily in clouds brings on the day,  
The great, th' important day, big with the fate  
Of Cato and of Rome——our father's death  
Would fill up all the guilt of civil war,  
And close the scene of blood. Already Cæsar  
Has ravag'd more than half the globe, and sees  
Mankind grown thin by his destructive sword :  
Should he go farther, numbers would be wanting  
To form new battles, and support his crimes.  
Ye gods, what havoc does ambition make  
Among your works !

*Marc.* 'Thy steady temper, Portius,  
Can look on guilt, rebellion, fraud, and Cæsar,  
In the calm lights of mild philosophy ;  
I'm tortur'd, ev'n to madness, when I think  
On the proud victor : ev'ry time he's nam'd  
Pharsalia rises to my view !—I see  
'Th' insulting tyrant prancing o'er the field,  
Strew'd with Rome's citizens, and drench'd in  
slaughter,

His horse's hoofs wet with patrician blood !  
Oh, Portius ! is there not some chosen curse,  
Some hidden thunder in the stores of Heav'n,  
Red with uncommon wrath, to blast the man  
Who owes his greatness to his country's ruin ?

*Por.* Believe me, Marcus, 'tis an impious greatness,  
And mix'd with too much horror to be envy'd ;  
How does the lustre of our father's actions,  
Through the dark cloud of ills that cover him,  
Break out, and burn with more triumphant brightness !  
His suff'rings shine, and spread a glory round him ;  
Greatly unfortunate, he fights the cause  
Of honour, virtue, liberty, and Rome.  
His sword ne'er fell, but on the guilty head ;  
Oppression, tyranny, and pow'r usurp'd,

Draw all the vengeance of his arm upon 'em.

*Marc.* Who knows not this! But what can Cato do  
Against a world, a base, degen'rate world,  
That courts the yoke, and bows the neck to Cæsar?  
Pent up in Utica, he vainly forms  
A poor epitome of Roman greatness,  
And, cover'd with Numidian guards, directs  
A feeble army, and an empty senate,  
Remnants of mighty battles fought in vain.  
By Heav'n, such virtues, join'd with such success,  
Distracts my very soul! our father's fortune  
Would almost tempt us to renounce his precepts.

*Por.* Remember what our father oft has told us :  
The ways of Heav'n are dark and intricate ;  
Puzzled in mazes, and perplex'd with errors,  
Our understanding traces them in vain,  
Lost and bewilder'd in the fruitless search ;  
Nor sees with how much art the windings run,  
Nor where the regular confusion ends.

*Marc.* These are suggestions of a mind at ease :  
Oh, Portius, didst thou taste but half the griefs  
That wring my soul, thou couldst not talk thus coldly.  
Passion unpitied, and successful love,  
Plant daggers in my heart, and aggravate  
My other griefs. Were but my Lucia kind—

*Por.* Thou seest not that thy brother is thy rival ;  
But I must hide it, for I know thy temper. [*Aside.*  
Now, Marcus, now thy virtue's on the proof :  
Put forth thy utmost strength, work ev'ry nerve,  
And call up all thy father in thy soul :  
To quell the tyrant, love, and guard thy heart  
On this weak side, where most our nature fails,  
Would be a conquest worthy Cato's son.

*Marc.* Portius, the counsel which I cannot take,  
Instead of healing, but upbraids my weakness.  
Bid me for honour plunge into a war  
Of thickest foes, and rush on certain death,  
Then shalt thou see that Marcus is not slow  
To follow glory, and confess his father.  
Love is not to be reason'd down, or lost

In high ambition or a thirst of greatness,  
'Tis second life, it grows into the soul,  
Warms every vein, and beats in every pulse,  
I feel it here : my resolution melts——

*Por.* Behold young Juba, the Numidian prince,  
With how much care he forms himself to glory,  
And breaks the fierceness of his native temper,  
To copy out our father's bright example.  
He loves our sister Marcia, greatly loves her ;  
“ His eyes, his looks, his actions, all betray it ;”  
But still the smother'd fondness burns within him ;  
“ When most it swells and labours for a vent,”  
The sense of honour, and desire of fame  
Drive the big passion back into his heart.  
What ! shall an African, shall Juba's heir  
Reproach great Cato's son, and shew the world  
A virtue wanting in a Roman soul !

*Marc.* Portius, no more ! your words leave stings  
behind 'em.

Whene'er did Juba, or did Portius, shew  
A virtue that has cast me at a distance,  
And thrown me out in the pursuits of honour ?

*Por.* Marcus, I know thy gen'rous temper well ;  
Fling but th' appearance of dishonour on it,  
It straight takes fire, and mounts into a blaze.

*Marc.* A brother's suff'rings claim a brother's  
pity.

*Por.* Heav'n knows I pity thee. Behold my eyes  
Ev'n whilst I speak—do they not swim in tears ?  
Were but my heart as naked to thy view,  
Marcus would see it bleed in his behalf.

*Marc.* Why then dost treat me with rebukes, instead  
Of kind condoling cares, and friendly sorrow ?

*Por.* Oh, Marcus ! did I know the way to ease  
Thy troubled heart, and mitigate thy pains,  
Marcus, believe me, I could die to do it.

*Marc.* Thou best of brothers, and thou best of  
friends !

Pardon a weak distemper'd soul, that swells  
With sudden gusts, and sinks as soon in calms,

The sport of passions. But Sempronius comes :  
He must not find this softness hanging on me.

[Exit Mar.]

*Enter SEMPRONIUS.*

*Sem.* Conspiracies no sooner should be form'd  
Than executed. What means Portius here ?  
I like not that cold youth. I must dissemble,  
And speak a language foreign to my heart. [*Aside.*  
Good-morrow, Portius: let us once embrace,  
Once more embrace, while yet we both are free.  
To-morrow, should we thus express our friendship,  
Each might receive a slave into his arms.  
'This sun, perhaps, this morning sun's the last,  
That e'er shall rise on Roman liberty.

*Por.* My father has this morning call'd together,  
To this poor hall, his little Roman senate,  
(The leavings of Pharsalia) to consult  
If he can yet oppose the mighty torrent  
That bears down Rome, and all her gods before it,  
Or must at length give up the world to Cæsar.

*Sem.* Not all the pomp and majesty of Rome  
Can raise her senate more than Cato's presence.  
His virtues render our assembly awful,  
They strike with something like religious fear,  
And make even Cæsar tremble at the head  
Of armies flush'd with conquest. Oh, my Portius!  
Could I but call that wond'rous man my father,  
Would but thy sister Marcia be propitious  
To thy friend's vows, I might be bless'd indeed !

*Por.* Alas, Sempronius ! wouldst thou talk of love  
To Marcia whilst her father's life's in danger ;  
'Thou might'st as well court the pale, trembling vestal,  
When she beholds the holy flame expiring.

*Sem.* The more I see the wonders of thy race,  
The more I'm charm'd. Thou must take heed, my  
Portius ;

'The world has all its eyes on Cato's son ;  
'Thy father's merit sets thee up to view,  
And shews thee in the fairest point of light,  
To make thy virtues or thy faults conspicuous.

*Por.* Well dost thou seem to check my ling'ring here  
On this important hour—I'll straight away,  
And while the fathers of the senate meet  
In close debate, to weigh th' events of war,  
I'll animate the soldiers' drooping courage  
With love of freedom, and contempt of life;  
I'll thunder in their ears their country's cause,  
And try to rouse up all that's Roman in 'em.  
'Tis not in mortals to command success,  
But we'll do more, Sempronius, we'll deserve it. [*Ex.*

*Sem.* Curse on the stripling! now he apes his sire!  
Ambitiously sententious—But I wonder  
Old Syphax comes not; his Numidian genius  
Is well dispos'd to mischief, were he prompt  
And eager on it: but he must be spur'd,  
And every moment quicken'd to the course.  
—Cato has us'd me ill: he has refus'd  
His daughter Marcia to my ardent vows.  
Besides, his baffled arms, and ruin'd cause,  
Are bars to my ambition. Cæsar's favour,  
That show'rs down greatness on his friends, will raise  
me

To Rome's first honour's. If I give up Cato,  
I claim, in my reward, his captive daughter.  
But Syphax comes——

*Enter SYPHAX.*

*Syph.* Sempronius, all is ready;  
I've sounded my Numidians, man by man,  
And find them ripe for a revolt: they all  
Complain aloud of Cato's discipline,  
And wait but the command to change their master.

*Sem.* Believe me, Syphax, there's no time to waste;  
Ev'n while we speak our conqueror comes on,  
And gathers ground upon us every moment.  
Alas! thou know'st not Cæsar's active soul,  
With what a dreadful course he rushes on  
From war to war. In vain has nature form'd  
Mountains and oceans to oppose his passage;  
He bounds o'er all; victorious in his march,  
The Alps and Pyreneans sink before him:

Through winds and waves, and storms, he works his way,

Impatient for the battle; one day more  
Will set the victor thund'ring at our gates.  
But, tell me, hast thou yet drawn o'er young Juba?  
That still would recommend thee more to Cæsar.  
And challenge better terms.

*Syph.* Alas, he's lost!

He's lost, Sempronius; all his thoughts are full  
Of Cato's virtues—But I'll try once more  
(For every instant I expect him here)  
If yet I can subdue those stubborn principles  
Of faith and honour, and I know not what,  
That have corrupted his Numidian temper,  
And struck th' infection into all his soul.

*Sem.* Be sure to press upon him every motive.  
Juba's surrender, since his father's death,  
Would give up Afric into Cæsar's hands,  
And make him lord of half the burning zone.

*Syph.* But is it true, Sempronius, that your senate  
Is call'd together? Gods! thou must be cautious;  
Cato has piercing eyes, and will discern  
Our frauds, unless they're cover'd thick with art.

*Sem.* Let me alone, good Syphax, I'll conceal  
My thoughts in passion, ('tis the surest way;)  
I'll hellow out for Rome, and for my country,  
And mouth at Cæsar 'till I shake the senate.  
Your cold hypocrisy's a stale device,  
A worn-out trick; wouldst thou be thought in earnest,  
Clothe thy feign'd zeal in rage, in fire, and fury!

*Syph.* In troth, thou'rt able to instruct grey hairs,  
And teach the wily African deceit.

*Sem.* Once more be sure to try thy skill on Juba.  
Meanwhile I'll hasten to my Roman soldiers,  
Inflame the mutiny, and underhand  
Blow up their discontents till they break out  
Unlook'd for, and discharge themselves on Cato.  
Remember, Syphax, we must work in haste:  
Oh, think what anxious moments pass between  
The birth of plots, and their last fatal periods!



Oh, 'tis a dreadful interval of time,  
Fill'd up with horror all, and big with death !  
Destruction hangs on every word we speak,  
On every thought, 'till the concluding stroke  
Determines all, and closes our design. [Exit.

*Syph.* I'll try if yet I can reduce to reason  
This headstrong youth, and make him spurn at Cato,  
The time is short ; Cæsar comes rushing on us—  
But hold ! young Juba sees me, and approaches.

*Enter JUBA.*

*Jub.* Syphax, I joy to meet thee thus alone.  
I have observ'd of late thy looks are fall'n,  
O'ercast with gloomy cares and discontent ;  
Then tell me, Syphax, I conjure thee, tell me,  
What are the thoughts that knit thy brow in frowns,  
And turn thine eyes thus coldly on thy prince ?

*Syph.* 'Tis not my talent to conceal my thoughts,  
Or carry smiles and sunshine in my face,  
When discontent sits heavy at my heart ;  
I have not yet so much the Roman in me.

*Jub.* Why dost thou cast out such ungen'rous terms  
Against the lords and sov'reigns of the world ?  
Dost thou not see mankind fall down before them,  
And own the force of their superior virtue ?  
Is there a nation in the wilds of Afric,  
Amidst our barren rocks, and burning sands,  
That does not tremble at the Roman name ?

*Syph.* Gods ! where's the worth that sets these  
people up  
Above her own Numidia's tawny sons ?  
Do they with tougher sinews bend the bow ?  
Or flies the jav'lin swifter to its mark,  
Launch'd from the vigour of a Roman arm ?  
Who like our active African instructs  
The fiery steed, and trains him to his hand ?  
Or guides in troops th' embattled elephant  
Laden with war ? These, these are arts, my prince,  
In which your Zama does not stoop to Rome.

*Jub.* These all are virtues of a meaner rank ;  
Perfections that are plac'd in bones and nerves.

A Roman soul is bent on higher views :  
To civilize the rude, unpolish'd world,  
And lay it under the restraint of laws ;  
To make man mild and sociable to man ;  
To cultivate the wild, licentious savage,  
With wisdom, discipline, and the lib'ral arts ;  
Th' embellishments of life : virtues like these  
Make human nature shine, reform the soul,  
And break our fierce barbarians into men.

*Syph.* Patience, kind Heav'ns !—excuse an old  
man's warmth :

What are those wond'rous civilizing arts,  
This Roman polish, and this smooth behaviour,  
That renders man thus tractable and tame ?  
Are they not only to disguise our passions,  
To set our looks at variance with our thoughts,  
To check the starts and sallies of the soul,  
And break off all its commerce with the tongue :  
In short, to change us into other creatures  
Than what our nature and the gods design'd us ?

*Jub.* To strike thee dumb ; turn up thy eyes to  
Cato ;

There may'st thou see to what a god-like height  
The Roman virtues lift up mortal man,  
While good, and just, and anxious for his friends,  
He's still severely bent against himself ;  
“ Renouncing sleep, and rest, and food, and ease,  
“ He strives with thirst and hunger, toil and heat.”  
And when his fortune sets before him all  
The pomps and pleasures that his soul can wish,  
His rigid virtue will accept of none.

*Syph.* Believe me, prince, there's not an African  
That traverses our vast Numidian deserts  
In quest of prey, and lives upon his bow,  
But better practises those boasted virtues.  
Coarse are his meals, the fortune of the chace,  
Amidst the running stream he slakes his thirst,  
Toils all the day, and at th' approach of night,  
On the first friendly bank he throws him down,  
Or rests his head upon a rock till morn :

Then rises fresh, pursues his wonted game,  
And if the following day he chance to find  
A new repast, or an untasted spring,  
Blesses his stars, and thinks it luxury.

*Jub.* Thy prejudices, Syphax, won't discern  
What virtues grow from ignorance and choice,  
Nor how the hero differs from the brute.

" But grant that others could with equal glory  
" Look down on pleasures, and the baits of sense,"  
Where shall we find the man that bears affliction,  
Great and majestic in his griefs, like Cato?

" Heav'n's! with what strength, what steadiness of  
" mind,

" He triumphs in the midst of all his sufferings!"  
How does he rise against a load of woes,  
And thank the gods that throw the weight upon  
him!

*Syph.* 'Tis pride, rank pride, and haughtiness of  
soul;

I think the Romans call it stoicism.  
Had not your royal father thought so highly  
Of Roman virtue, and of Cato's cause,  
He had not fall'n by a slave's hand inglorious:  
Nor would his slaughter'd army now have lain  
On Afric sands disfigured with their wounds.  
To gorge the wolves and vultures of Numidia.

*Jub.* Why dost thou call my sorrows up afresh?  
My father's name brings tears into my eyes.

*Syph.* Oh, that you'd profit by your father's ills!

*Jub.* What wouldst thou have me do?

*Syph.* Abandon Cato.

*Jub.* Syphax, I should be more than twice an orphan  
By such a loss.

*Syph.* Ay, there's the tie that binds you!  
You long to call him father. Marcia's charms  
Work in your heart unseen, and plead for Cato.  
No wonder you are deaf to all I say.

*Jub.* Syphax, your zeal becomes importunate;  
I've hitherto permitted it to rave,  
And talk at large; but learn to keep it in,

Lest it should take more freedom than I'll give it.

*Syph.* Sir, your great father never us'd me thus.  
Alas, he's dead! but can you e'er forget  
The tender sorrows, and the pangs of nature,  
"The fond embraces, and repeated blessings,"  
Which you drew from him in your last farewell?  
Still must I cherish the dear sad remembrance,  
At once to torture and to please my soul.  
The good old king at parting wrung my hand  
(His eyes brim-full of tears), then sighing, cry'd,  
Pr'ythee be careful of my son!—His grief  
Swell'd up so high, he could not utter more.

*Jub.* Alas! thy story melts away my soul;  
That best of fathers! how shall I discharge  
The gratitude and duty which I owe him?

*Syph.* By laying up his counsels in your heart.

*Jub.* His counsels bid me yield to thy directions:  
Then, Syphax, chide me in severest terms,  
Vent all thy passion, and I'll stand its shock,  
Calm and unruffled as a summer sea,  
When not a breath of wind flies o'er its surface.

*Syph.* Alas! my prince, I'd guide thee to your  
safety.

*Jub.* I do believe thou wouldst; but tell me how?

*Syph.* Fly from the fate that follows Cæsar's foes.

*Jub.* My father scorn'd to do it.

*Syph.* And therefore dy'd.

*Jub.* Better to die ten thousand thousand deaths,  
Than wound my honour.

*Syph.* Rather say your love.

*Jub.* Syphax, I've promis'd to preserve my temper.  
Why wilt thou urge me to confess a flame  
I long have stifled, and would fain conceal?

*Syph.* Believe me, prince, though hard to conquer  
love,

'Tis easy to divert and break its force.  
Absence might cure it, or a second mistress  
Light up another flame, and put out this.  
The glowing dames of Zama's royal court  
Have faces flush'd with more exalted charms;

The sun that rolls his chariot o'er their heads,  
Works up more fire and colour in their cheeks;  
Were you with these, my prince, you'd soon forget  
The pale, unripen'd beauties of the North.

*Jub.* 'Tis not a set of features, or complexion,  
The tincture of a skin, that I admire:  
Beauty soon grows familiar to the lover,  
Fades in his eye, and palls upon the sense.  
The virtuous Marcia tow'rs above her sex:  
True, she is fair, (Oh, how divinely fair!)  
But still the lovely maid improves her charms  
With inward greatness, unaffected wisdom,  
And sanctity of manners; Cato's soul  
Shines out in every thing she acts or speaks,  
While winning mildness and attractive smiles,  
Dwell in her looks, and with becoming grace  
Softens the vigour of her father's virtue.

*Syph.* How does your tongue grow wanton in her  
praise!

But on my knees I beg you would consider——

*Jub.* Ha! Syphax, is't not she?—She moves this  
way:

And with her Lucia, Lucius's fair daughter.  
My heart beats thick—I pr'ythee, Syphax, leave me.

*Syph.* Ten thousand curses fasten on them both!  
Now will the woman, with a single glance,  
Undo what I've been lab'ring all this while,

[Exit Syphax.]

*Enter MARCIA and LUCIA.*

*Jub.* Hail, charming maid! How does thy beauty  
smooth

The face of war, and make ev'n horror smile!  
At sight of thee my heart shakes off its sorrows;  
I feel a dawn of joy break in upon me,  
And for a while forget the approach of Cæsar.

*Mar.* I should be griev'd, young prince, to think  
my presence

Unbent your thoughts, and slacken'd 'em to arms,  
While, warm with slaughter, our victorious foe  
Threatens aloud, and calls you to the field.

*Jub.* Oh, Marcia, let me hope thy kind concerns  
And gentle wishes follow me to battle!  
The thought will give new vigour to my arm,  
Add strength and weight to my descending sword,  
And drive it in a tempest on the foe.

*Mar.* My prayers and wishes always shall attend  
The friends of Rome, the glorious cause of virtue,  
And men approv'd of by the gods and Cato.

*Jub.* That Juba may deserve thy pious cares,  
I'll gaze for ever on thy god-like father,  
Transplanting one by one, into my life,  
His bright perfection, 'till I shine like him.

*Mar.* My father never, at a time like this,  
Would lay out his great soul in words, and waste  
Such precious moments.

*Jub.* Thy reproofs are just,  
Thou virtuous maid; I'll hasten to my troops,  
And fire their languid souls with Cato's virtue.  
If e'er I lead them to the field, when all  
The war shall stand rang'd in its just array,  
And dreadful pomp; then will I think on thee.  
Oh, lovely maid! then will I think on thee;  
And in the shock of charging hosts, remember  
What glorious deeds should grace the man who hopes  
For Marcia's love. [Exit Juba.

*Luc.* Marcia, you're too severe;  
How cou'd you chide the young good-natur'd prince,  
And drive him from you with so stern an air,  
A prince that loves and doats on you to death?

*Mar.* 'Tis therefore, Lucia, that I chid him from me.  
His air, his voice, his looks, and honest soul,  
Speak all so movingly in his behalf,  
I dare not trust myself to hear him talk.

*Luc.* Why will you fight against so sweet a passion,  
And steel your heart to such a world of charms?

*Mar.* How, Lucia! wouldst thou have me sink away  
In pleasing dreams, and lose myself in love,  
When every moment Cato's life's at stake?  
Cæsar comes arm'd with terror and revenge,  
And aims his thunder at my father's head.



Should not the sad occasion swallow up  
My other cares, "and draw them all into it?"

*Luc.* Why have not I this constancy of mind,  
Who have so many griefs to try its force?  
Sure, nature form'd me of her softest mould,  
Enfeebled all my soul with tender passions,  
And sunk me ev'n below my own weak sex:  
Pity and love, by turns, oppress my heart.

*Mar.* Lucia, disburthen all thy cares on me,  
And let me share thy most retir'd distress.  
Tell me who raises up this conflict in thee?

*Luc.* I need not blush to name them, when I tell  
thee  
They're Marcia's brothers, and the sons of Cato.

*Mar.* They both behold thee with their sister's eyes,  
And often have reveal'd their passion to me.

"But tell me, whose address thou fav'rest most!

"I long to know, and yet I dread to hear it.

"*Luc.* Which is it Marcia wishes for?

"*Mar.* For neither——

"And yet for both——The youths have equal share

"In Marcia's wishes, and divide their sister:"

But tell me which of them is Lucia's choice?

"*Luc.* Marcia, they both are high in my esteem,

"But in my love—Why wilt thou make me name him!

"Thou know'st it is a blind and foolish passion,

"Pleas'd and disgusted with it knows not what—

"*Mar.* Oh, Lucia, I'm perplex'd! Oh, tell me  
"which

"I must hereafter call my happy brother?"

*Luc.* Suppose 'twere Portius, could you blame my  
choice?

——Oh, Portius, thou hast stol'n away my soul!

"With what a graceful tenderness he loves!

"And breathes the softest, the sincerest vows!

"Complacency, and truth, and manly sweetness,

"Dwell ever on his tongue, and smooth his thoughts."

Marcus is over-warm, his fond complaints

Have so much earnestness and passion in them,

I hear them with a secret kind of horror,

And tremble at his vehemence of temper.

*Mar.* Alas, poor youth! "how canst thou throw  
"him from thee?"

"Lucia, thou know'st not half the love he bears thee:

"Whene'er he speaks of thee his heart's in flames,

"He sends out all his soul in ev'ry word,

"And thinks, and talks, and looks, like one trans-  
"ported.

"Unhappy youth!" How will thy coldness raise  
Tempests and storms in his afflicted bosom!

I dread the consequence.

*Luc.* You seem to plead  
Against your brother Portius.

*Mar.* Heav'n forbid!

Had Portius been the unsuccessful lover,  
The same compassion would have fall'n on him.

*Luc.* Was ever virgin love distress'd like mine!  
Portius himself oft falls in tears before me,  
As if he mourn'd his rival's ill success,  
Then bids me hide the motions of my heart,  
Nor shew which way it turns. So much he fears  
The sad effects that it will have on Marcus.

"*Mar.* He knows too well how easily he's fir'd,  
"And would not plunge his brother in despair,  
"But waits for happier times, and kinder moments.

"*Luc.* Alas! too late I find myself involv'd  
"In endless griefs and labyrinths of woe,  
"Born to afflict my Marcia's family,  
"And sow dissension in the hearts of brothers.  
"Tormenting thought! It cuts into my soul."

*Mar.* Let us not, Lucia, aggravate our sorrows,  
But to the gods submit th' event of things.  
Our lives, discolour'd with our present woes,  
May still grow bright, and smile with happier hours.

So the pure limpid streams, when foul with stains  
Of rushing torrents, and descending rains,  
Works itself clear, and, as it runs refines,  
"Till by degrees the floating mirror shines,  
Reflects each flow'r that on the border grows,  
And a new heav'n in its fair bosom shows. [*Exeunt.*

## ACT II. SCENE I.

*The Senate. LUCIUS, SEMPRONIUS, and Senators.*

*Sempronius.* ROME still survives in this assembled senate!

Let us remember we are Cato's friends,  
And act like men who claim that glorious title.

*Luc.* Cato will soon be here, and open to us  
Th' occasion of our meeting. Hark! he comes!  
[*A sound of Trumpets.*

May all the guardian gods of Rome direct him!

*Enter CATO.*

*Cato.* Fathers, we once again are met in council:  
Cæsar's approach has summon'd us together,  
And Rome attends her fate from our resolves.  
How shall we treat this bold aspiring man?  
Success still follows him, and backs his crimes;  
Pharsalia gave him Rome, Egypt has since  
Received his yoke, and the whole Nile is Cæsar's.  
Why should I mention Juba's overthrow,  
And Scipio's death? Numidia's burning sands  
Still smoke with blood. 'Tis time we should decree  
What course to take. Our foe advances on us,  
And envies us ev'n Lybia's sultry desarts.  
Fathers, pronounce your thoughts: are they still fix'd  
To hold it out and fight it to the last?  
Or are your hearts subdu'd at length, and wrought  
By time, and ill success, to a submission?  
*Sempronius, speak.*

*Sem.* My voice is still for war.  
Gods! can a Roman senate long debate  
Which of the two to choose, slav'ry or death!  
No, let us rise at once, gird on our swords,  
And at the head of our remaining troops  
Attack the foe, break through the thick array  
Of his throng'd legions, and charge home upon him.  
Perhaps some arm, more lucky than the rest,  
May reach his heart, and free the world from bondage.  
Rise, fathers, rise! 'Tis Rome demands your help:  
Rise, and revenge your slaughter'd citizens,

Or share their fate ! The corpse of half her senate  
Manure the fields of Thessaly, while we  
Sit here delib'rating in cold debates,  
If we should sacrifice our lives to honour,  
Or wear them out in servitude and chains.  
Rouse up, for shame ! our brothers of Pharsalia  
Point at their wounds, and cry aloud—To battle !  
Great Pompey's shade complains that we are slow ;  
And Scipio's ghost walks unreveng'd amongst us.

*Cato.* Let not a torrent of impetuous zeal  
Transport thee thus beyond the bounds of reason :  
True fortitude is seen in great exploits  
That justice warrants, and that wisdom guides :  
All else is tow'ring frenzy and distraction.  
Are not the lives of those that draw the sword  
In Rome's defence entrusted to our care ?  
Should we thus lead them to a field of slaughter,  
Might not th' impartial world with reason say,  
We lavish'd at our deaths the blood of thousands,  
To grace our fall, and make our ruin glorious ?  
Lucius, we next would know what's your opinion ?

*Luc.* My thoughts, I must confess, are turn'd on  
peace.

Already have our quarrels fill'd the world  
With widows, and with orphans : Scythia mourns  
Our guilty wars, and earth's remotest regions  
Lie half unpeopled by the feuds of Rome :  
'Tis time to sheath the sword, and spare mankind.  
It is not Cæsar, but the gods, my fathers,  
The gods declare against us, and repel  
Our vain attempts. “ To urge the foe to battle,  
“ (Prompted by blind revenge and wild despair)  
“ Were to refuse th' awards of Providence,  
“ And not to rest in Heaven's determination.”  
Already have we shewn our love to Rome,  
Now let us shew submission to the gods.  
We took up arms, not to revenge ourselves,  
But free the commonwealth : when this end fails,  
Arms have no further use. Our country's cause,

That drew our swords, now wrests 'em from our hands,

And bids us not delight in Roman blood  
Unprofitably shed. What men could do,  
Is done already: Heav'n and earth will witness,  
If Rome must fall, that we are innocent.

“ *Sem.* This smooth discourse, and mild behaviour, oft

“ Conceal a traitor——something whispers me

“ All is not right—Cato, beware of Lucius.

“ [*Aside to Cato.*”

*Cato.* Let us appear nor rash nor diffident;  
Immoderate valour swells into a fault;  
And fear admitted into public councils  
Betrays like treason. Let us shun 'em both.  
Fathers, I cannot see that our affairs  
Are grown thus desp'rate: we have bulwarks round us;  
Within our walls are troops inur'd to toil  
In Afric's heat, and season'd to the sun;  
Numidia's spacious kingdom lies behind us,  
Ready to rise at its young prince's call.  
While there is hopes, do not distrust the gods;  
But wait at least till Cæsar's near approach  
Force us to yield. 'Twill never be too late  
To sue for chains, and own a conqueror.  
Why should Rome fall a moment ere her time;  
No, let us draw her term of freedom out  
In its full length, and spin it to the last,  
So shall we gain still one day's liberty:  
And let me perish, but in Cato's judgment,  
A day, an hour, of virtuous liberty,  
Is worth an whole eternity in bondage.

*Enter MARCUS.*

*Marc.* Fathers, this moment, as I watch'd the gate,  
Lodg'd on my post, a herald is arriv'd  
From Cæsar's camp, and with him comes old Decius,  
The Roman knight; he carries in his looks  
Impatience, and demands to speak with Cato.

*Cato.* By your permission, fathers—bid him enter.

[*Exit Marcus.*

Decius was once my friend, but other prospects  
Have loos'd those ties, and bound him fast to Cæsar.  
His message may determine our resolves.

*Enter DECIVS.*

*Dec.* Cæsar sends health to Cato—

*Cato.* Cou'd he send it

To Cato's slaughter'd friends, it would be welcome.  
Are not your orders to address the senate?

*Dec.* My business is with Cato! Cæsar sees  
The straights to which you're driven; and, as he knows  
Cato's high worth, is anxious for your life.

*Cato.* My life is grafted on the fate of Rome.  
Wou'd he save Cato, bid him spare his country.  
Tell your dictator this; and tell him, Cato  
Disdains a life which he has power to offer.

*Dec.* Rome and her senators submit to Cæsar;  
Her gen'als and her consuls are no more,  
Who check'd his conquests, and deny'd his triumphs.  
Why will not Cato be this Cæsar's friend?

*Cato.* These very reasons thou hast urg'd forbid it.

*Dec.* Cato, I have orders to expostulate,  
And reason with you, as from friend to friend:  
Think on the storm that gathers o'er your head,  
And threatens ev'ry hour to burst upon it;  
Still may you stand high in your country's honours,  
Do but comply and make your peace with Cæsar,  
Rome will rejoice and cast its eyes on Cato,  
As on the second of mankind.

*Cato.* No more:

I must not think of life on such conditions.

*Dec.* Cæsar is well acquainted with your virtues,  
And therefore sets this value on your life.  
Let him but know the price of Cato's friendship,  
And name your terms.

*Cato.* Bid him disband his legions,  
Restore the commonwealth to liberty,  
Submit his actions to the public censure,  
And stand the judgment of a Roman senate.  
Bid him do this, and Cato is his friend.

*Dec.* Cato, the world talks loudly of your wisdom—



*Cato.* Nay, more, tho' Cato's voice was ne'er employ'd

To clear the guilty, and to varnish crimes,  
Myself will mount the rostrum in his favour,  
And strive to gain his pardon from the people.

*Dec.* A style like this becomes a conqueror.

*Cato.* Decius, a style like this becomes a Roman.

*Dec.* What is a Roman, that is Cæsar's foe?

*Cato.* Greater than Cæsar: he's a friend to virtue.

*Dec.* Consider, Cato, you're in Utica,  
And at the head of your own little senate;  
You don't now thunder in the capitol,  
With all the mouths of Rome to second you.

*Cato.* Let him consider that who drives us hither.  
'Tis Cæsar's sword has made Rome's senate little,  
And thinn'd its ranks. Alas! thy dazzled eye  
Beholds this man in a false glaring light;  
Which conquest and success have thrown upon him;  
Did'st thou but view him right, thou'dst see him black  
With murder, treason, sacrilege, and crimes,  
That strike my soul with horror but to name 'em.  
I know thou look'st on me, as on a wretch  
Beset with ills, and cover'd with misfortunes!  
But, by the gods I swear, millions of worlds  
Shou'd never buy me to be like that Cæsar.

*Dec.* Does Cato send this answer back to Cæsar,  
For all his gen'rous cares and proffer'd friendship?

*Cato.* His cares for me are insolent and vain:  
Presumptuous man! the gods take care of Cato.  
Wou'd Cæsar shew the greatness of his soul,  
Bid him employ his care for these my friends,  
And make good use of his ill-gotten pow'r,  
By shelt'ring men much better than himself.

*Dec.* Your high unconquer'd heart inakes you forget  
You are a man. You rush on your destruction.  
But I have done. When I relate hereafter  
The tale of this unhappy embassy,  
All Rome will be in tears.

[Exit Decius.

*Sem.* Cato, we thank thee.  
The mighty genius of immortal Rome

Speaks in thy voice ; thy soul breathes liberty.  
Cæsar will shrink to hear the words thou utter'st,  
And shudder in the midst of all his conquests.

*Luc.* The senate owns its gratitude to Cato,  
Who with so great a soul consults its safety,  
And guards our lives while he neglects his own.

*Sem.* Sempronius gives no thanks on this account.  
Lucius seems fond of life ; but what is life ?  
'Tis not to stalk about and draw fresh air  
From time to time, or gaze upon the sun ;  
'Tis to be free. When liberty is gone,  
Life grows insipid, and has lost its relish.  
Oh, could my dying hand but lodge a sword  
In Cæsar's bosom, and revenge my country !  
By Heav'n's I could enjoy the pangs of death,  
And smile in agony.

*Luc.* Others, perhaps,  
May serve their country with as warm a zeal,  
Though 'tis not kindled into so much rage.

*Sem.* This sober conduct is a mighty virtue  
In lukewarm patriots.

*Cato.* Come ; no more, Sempronius,  
All here are friends to Rome, and to each other.  
Let us not weaken still the weaker side  
By our divisions.

*Sem.* Cato, my resentments  
Are sacrific'd to Rome—I stand reprov'd.

*Cato.* Fathers, 'tis time you come to a resolve.

*Luc.* Cato, we all go into your opinion.  
Cæsar's behaviour has convinc'd the senate  
We ought to hold it out till terms arrive.

*Sem.* We ought to hold it out till death ; but, Cato,  
My private voice is drown'd amidst the senate's.

*Cato.* Then let us rise, my friends, and strive to fill  
This little interval, this pause of life,  
(While yet our liberty and fates are doubtful)  
With resolution, friendship, Roman bravery,  
And all the virtues we can crowd into it ;  
'That Heav'n may say it ought to be prolong'd.  
Fathers, farewell—The young Numidian prince

Comes forward, and expects to know our counsels. -

[*Exeunt Senators.*]

*Enter JUBA.*

Juba, the Roman senate has resolv'd,  
Till time gives better prospects, still to keep  
The sword unsheath'd, and turn its edge on Cæsar.

*Jub.* The resolution fits a Roman senate.  
But Cato, lend me for a while thy patience,  
And condescend to hear a young man speak.  
My father, when, some days before his death,  
He order'd me to march for Utica,  
(Alas! I thought not then his death so near!)  
Wept o'er me, press'd me in his aged arms,  
And, as his griefs gave way, My son, said he,  
Whatever fortune shall befall thy father,  
Be Cato's friend; he'll train thee up to great  
And virtuous deeds; do but observe him well,  
Thou'lt shun misfortunes, or thou'lt learn to bear 'em.

*Cato.* Juba, thy father was a worthy prince,  
And merited, alas! a better fate;  
But Heav'n thought otherwise.

*Jub.* My father's fate,  
In spite of all the fortitude that shines  
Before my face in Cato's great example,  
Subdues my soul, and fills my eyes with tears.

*Cato.* It is an honest sorrow, and becomes thee.

*Jub.* My father drew respect from foreign climes:  
The kings of Afric sought him for their friend;  
"Kings far remote, that rule, as fame reports,  
Behind the hidden sources of the Nile,  
In distant worlds, on t'other side the sun;"  
Oft have their black ambassadors appear'd,  
Loaden with gifts, and filled the courts of Zama.

*Cato.* I am no stranger to thy father's greatness.

*Jub.* I would not boast the greatness of my father,  
But point out more alliances to Cato.  
Had we not better leave this Utica,  
To arm Numidia in our cause, and court  
The assistance of my father's powerful friends;  
Did they know Cato, our remotest kings,

Would pour embattled multitudes about him;  
 Their swarthy hosts would darken all our plains,  
 Doubling the native horror of the war,  
 And making death more grim.

*Cato.* And canst thou think  
 Cato will fly before the sword of Cæsar!  
 Reduc'd, like Hannibal, to seek relief  
 From court to court, and wander up and down  
 A vagabond in Afric.

*Jub.* Cato, perhaps  
 I'm too officious; but my forward cares  
 Would fain preserve a life of so much value.  
 My heart is wounded when I see such virtue  
 Afflicted by the weight of such misfortunes.

*Cato.* Thy nobleness of soul obliges me.  
 But know, young prince, that valour soars above  
 What the world calls misfortune and affliction.  
 These are not ills; else would they never fall  
 On Heav'n's first fav'rites, and the best of men.  
 The gods, in bounty, work up storms about us,  
 That give mankind occasion to exert  
 Their hidden strength, and throw out into practice  
 Virtues that shun the day, and lie conceal'd  
 In the smooth seasons and the calms of life.

*Jub.* I'm charm'd whene'er thou talk'st; I pant for  
 virtue;  
 And all my soul endeavours at perfection.

*Cato.* Dost thou love watchings, abstinence, and  
 toil,

Laborious virtues all? Learn them from Cato;  
 Success and fortune must thou learn from Cæsar.

*Jub.* The best good fortune that can fall on Juba,  
 The whole success at which my heart aspires  
 Depends on Cato.

*Cato.* What does Juba say?  
 The words confound me.

*Jub.* I would fain retract them,  
 Give 'em me back again: they aim'd at nothing.

*Cato.* Tell me thy wish, young prince; make not  
 my ear

A stranger to thy thoughts.

*Jub.* Oh! they're extravagant ;  
Still let me hide them.

*Cato.* What can Juba ask  
That Cato will refuse ?

*Jub.* I fear to name it.  
Marcia—inherits all her father's virtues.

*Cato.* What would'st thou say ?

*Jub.* Cato, thou hast a daughter.

*Cato.* Adieu, young prince : I would not hear a  
word

Should lessen thee in my esteem. Remember  
The hand of Fate is over us, and Heav'n  
Exacts severity from all our thoughts,  
It is not now a time to talk of ought  
But chains, or conquest ; liberty, or death. [*Exit.*

*Enter* SYPHAX.

*Syph.* How's this, my prince! What, cover'd with  
confusion ?

You look as if yon stern philosopher  
Had just now chid you.

*Jub.* Syphax, I'm undone!

*Syph.* I know it well.

*Jub.* Cato thinks meanly of me.

*Syph.* And so will all mankind.

*Jub.* I've open'd to him

The weakness of my soul, my love for Marcia.

*Syph.* Cato's a proper person to entrust  
A love-tale with.

*Jub.* Oh, I could pierce my heart,  
My foolish heart. Was ever wretch like Juba!

*Syph.* Alas, my prince, how are you chang'd of late!  
I've known young Juba rise before the sun,  
To beat the thicket where the tiger slept,  
Or seek the lion in his dreadful haunts :  
How did the colour mount into your cheeks,  
When first you rous'd him to the chase ! I've seen  
you,

Ev'n in the Lybian dog-days, hunt him down,  
Then charge him close, provoke him to the rage

Of fangs and claws, and stooping from your horse,  
Rivet the panting savage to the ground.

*Jub.* Pr'ythee no more.

*Syph.* How would the old king smile  
To see you weigh the paws, when tipp'd with gold,  
And throw the shaggy spoils about your shoulders!

*Jub.* Syphax, this old man's talk (though honey-  
flow'd

In every word) wou'd now lose all its sweetness.  
Cato's displeas'd, and Marcia lost for ever.

*Syph.* Young prince, I yet could give you good ad-  
vice,

Marcia might still be yours.

*Jub.* What say'st thou, Syphax?

By Heav'n's, thou turn'st me all into attention.

*Syph.* Marcia might still be yours.

*Jub.* As how, dear Syphax?

*Syph.* Juba commands Numidia's hardy troops,  
Mounted on steeds unus'd to the restraint  
Of curbs or bits, and fleetier than the winds.  
Give but the word, we'll snatch this damsel up,  
And bear her off.

*Jub.* Can such dishonest thoughts  
Rise up in man? Wouldst thou seduce my youth  
To do an act that would destroy mine honour?

*Syph.* Gods, I could tear my hair to hear you talk!  
Honour's a fine imaginary notion,  
That draws in raw and unexperienc'd men,  
To real mischiefs, while they hunt a shadow.

*Jub.* Wouldst thou degrade thy prince into a ruffian?

*Syph.* The boasted ancestors of those great men,  
Whose virtues you admire, were all such ruffians.  
This dread of nations, this almighty Rome,  
That comprehends in her wide empire's bounds  
All under Heav'n, was founded on a rape;  
Your Scipios, Cæsars, Pompeys, and your Cato's  
(The gods on earth), are all the spurious blood  
Of violated maids, of ravish'd Sabines.

*Jub.* Syphax, I fear that hoary head of thine  
Abounds too much in our Numidian wiles.



*Syph.* Indeed, my prince, you want to know the world.

You have not read mankind ; your youth admires  
The throes and swellings of a Roman soul,  
Cato's bold flights, th' extravagance of virtue.

*Jub.* If knowledge of the world makes men perfidious,

May Juba ever live in ignorance !

*Syph.* Go, go ; you're young.

*Jub.* Gods, must I tamely bear  
This arrogance unanswer'd ! 'Thou'rt a traitor,  
A false old traitor.

*Syph.* I have gone too far. [ *Aside.*

*Jub.* Cato shall know the baseness of thy soul.

*Syph.* I must appease this storm or perish in it.

[ *Aside.*

Young prince, behold these locks, that are grown  
white

Beneath a helmet in your father's battles.

*Jub.* Those locks shall ne'er protect thy insolence.

*Syph.* Must one rash word, th' infirmity of age,  
Throw down the merit of my better years ?  
This the reward of a whole life of service !

—Curse on the boy ! how steadily he hears me !

[ *Aside.*

*Jub.* Is it because the throne of my forefathers  
Still stands unfill'd, and that Numidia's crown  
Hangs doubtful yet whose head it shall inclose,  
Thou thus presum'st to treat thy prince with scorn ?

*Syph.* Why will you rive my heart with such expressions ?

Does not old Syphax follow you to war ?  
What are his aims ? Why does he load with darts  
His trembling hand, and crush beneath a casque  
His wrinkled brows ? What is it he aspires to ?  
Is it not this ? to shed the slow remains,  
His last poor ebb of blood, in your defence ?

*Jub.* Syphax, no more ? I would not hear you talk.

*Syph.* Not hear me talk ! what, when my faith to  
Juba,

My royal master's son, is call'd in question?  
My prince may strike me dead, and I'll be dumb;  
But whilst I live I must not hold my tongue,  
And languish out old age in his displeasure.

*Jub.* Thou know'st the way too well into my heart,  
I do believe thee loyal to thy prince.

*Syph.* What greater instance can I give? I've offer'd  
To do an action which my soul abhors,  
And gain you whom you love, at any price.

*Jub.* Was this thy motive? I have been too hasty.

*Syph.* And 'tis for this my prince has call'd me  
traitor.

*Jub.* Sure thou mistak'st; I did not call thee so.

*Syph.* You did, indeed, my prince, you call'd me  
traitor.

Nay, further, threaten'd you'd complain to Cato.  
Of what, my prince, would you complain to Cato?  
That Syphax loves you, and would sacrifice  
His life, nay, more, his honour, in your service.

*Jub.* Syphax, I know thou lov'st me; but indeed  
Thy zeal for Juba carried thee too far.  
Honour's a sacred tie; the law of kings,  
The noble mind's distinguishing perfection,  
That aids and strengthens virtue where it meets her,  
And imitates her actions where she is not:  
It ought not to be sported with.

*Syph.* By Heav'n's,  
I'm ravish'd when you talk thus, though you chide me!  
Alas! I've hitherto been used to think  
A blind official zeal to serve my king,  
The ruling principle, that ought to burn  
And quench all others in a subject heart.  
Happy the people who preserve their honour  
By the same duties that oblige their prince.

*Jub.* Syphax, thou now beginn'st to speak thyself.  
Numidia's grown a scorn among the nations,  
For breach of public vows. Our Punic faith  
Is infamous and branded to a proverb.  
Syphax, we'll join our cares, to purge away  
Our country's crimes, and clear her reputation.

*Syph.* Believe me, prince, you make old Syphax weep,

To hear you talk—But 'tis with tears of joy.  
If e'er your father's crown adorn your brows,  
Numidia will be blest by Cato's lectures.

*Jub.* Syphax, thy hand; we'll mutually forget  
The warmth of youth, and frowardness of age;  
Thy prince esteems thy worth, and loves thy person.  
If e'er the sceptre come into my hand,  
Syphax shall stand the second in my kingdom.

*Syph.* Why will you overwhelm my age with kindness?

My joys grow burdensome, I shan't support it.

*Jub.* Syphax, farewell. I'll hence, and try to find  
Some blest occasion that may set me right  
In Cato's thoughts. I'd rather have that man  
Approve my deeds, than worlds for my admirers. [*Ex.*

*Syph.* Young men soon give, and soon forget affronts;

Old age is slow in both—A false old traitor!—  
These words, rash boy, may chance to cost thee dear.  
My heart had still some foolish fondness for thee:  
But hence, 'tis gone! I give it to the winds:  
Cæsar, I'm wholly thine.

*Enter SEMPRONIUS.*

All hail, Sempronius!

Well, Cato's senate is resolv'd to wait  
The fury of a siege before it yields.

*Sem.* Syphax, we both were on the verge of fate:  
Lucius declar'd for peace, and terms were offer'd  
To Cato by a messenger from Cæsar.  
Shou'd they submit ere our designs are ripe,  
We both must perish in the common wreck,  
Lost in the gen'ral undistinguish'd ruin.

*Syph.* But how stands Cato?

*Sem.* Thou hast seen mount Atlas:  
Whilst storms and tempests thunder on its brows,  
And oceans break their billows at its feet,  
It stands unmov'd, and glories in its height:  
Such is that haughty man; his tow'ring soul,

'Midst all the shocks and injuries of fortune,  
Rises superior, and looks down on Cæsar.

*Syph.* But what's this messenger?

*Sem.* I've practis'd with him,  
And found a means to let the victor know  
That Syphax and Sempronius are his friends.  
But let me now examine in my turn :  
Is Juba fix'd?

*Syph.* Yes—but it is to Cato.  
I've try'd the force of ev'ry reason on him,  
Sooth'd and caress'd; been angry, sooth'd again ;  
Laid safety, life, and int'rest in his sight.  
But all are vain, he scorns them all for Cato.

*Sem.* Come, 'tis no matter ; we shall do without  
him.

He'll make a pretty figure in a triumph,  
And serve to trip before the victor's chariot.  
Syphax, I now may hope thou hast forsook  
Thy Juba's cause, and wishest Marcia mine.

*Syph.* May she be thine as fast as thou wouldst  
have her.

*Sem.* Syphax, I love that woman ; though I curse  
Her and myself, yet, spite of me, I love her.

*Syph.* Make Cato sure, and give up Utica,  
Cæsar will ne'er refuse thee such a trifle.  
But are thy troops prepar'd for a revolt ?  
Does the sedition catch from man to man,  
And run among the ranks?

*Sem.* All, all is ready,  
The factious leaders are our friends, that spread  
Murmurs and discontents among the soldiers ;  
They count their toilsome marches, long fatigues,  
Unusual fastings, and will bear no more  
This medley of philosophy and war.  
Within an hour they'll storm the senate-house.

*Syph.* Meanwhile I'll draw up my Numidian troops  
Within the square to exercise their arms,  
And as I see occasion, favour thee.  
I laugh to see how your unshaken Cato,  
Will look aghast, while unforeseen destruction

Pours in upon him thus from every side.

So, where our wide Numidian wastes extend,  
Sudden, th' impetuous hurricanes descend,  
Wheel through the air, in circling eddies play,  
Tear up the sands, and sweep whole plains away.  
The helpless traveller, with wild surprise,  
Sees the dry desert all around him rise,  
And smother'd in the dusty whirlwind, dies. [*Exeunt.*]

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### ACT III. SCENE I.

*Enter* MARCUS and PORTIUS.

*Marcus.* THANKS to my stars I have not rang'd about  
The wilds of life, ere I could find a friend;  
Nature first pointed out my Portius to me,  
And early taught me, by her secret force,  
To love thy person, ere I knew thy merit,  
Till what was instinct, grew up into friendship.

*Por.* Marcus, the friendships of the world are oft  
Confed'racies in vice, or leagues of pleasure;  
Ours has severest virtue for its basis,  
And such a friendship ends not but with life.

*Marc.* Portius, thou know'st my soul in all its weakness,

Then pr'ythee spare me on its tender side.  
Indulge me but in love, my other passions  
Shall rise and fall by virtue's nicest rules.

*Por.* When love's well-tim'd, 'tis not a fault to love.  
The strong, the brave, the virtuous, and the wise,  
Sink in the soft captivity together.  
I would not urge thee to dismiss thy passion,  
(I know 'twere vain) but to suppress its force,  
Till better times may make it look more graceful.

*Marc.* Alas! thou talk'st like one who never felt  
Th' impatient throbs and longings of a soul  
That pants and reaches after distant good.  
A lover does not live by vulgar time:  
Believe me, Portius, in my Lucia's absence  
Life hangs upon me, and becomes a burden;

And yet, when I behold the charming maid,  
I'm ten times more undone ; while hope and fear,  
And grief, and rage, and love, rise up at once,  
And with variety of pain distract me.

*Por.* What can thy Portius do to give thee help ?

*Marc.* Portius, thou oft enjoy'st the fair one's presence ;

Then undertake my cause, and plead it to her  
With all the strength and heat of eloquence  
Fraternal love and friendship can inspire.  
Tell her thy brother languishes to death,  
And fades away, and withers in his bloom ;  
That he forgets his sleep, and loathes his food,  
That youth, and health, and war, are joyless to him ;  
Describe his anxious days, and restless nights,  
And all the torments that thou see'st me suffer.

*Por.* Marcus, I beg thee give me not an office  
That suits with me so ill. Thou know'st my temper.

*Marc.* Wilt thou behold me sinking in my woes,  
And wilt thou not reach out a friendly arm,  
To raise me from amidst this plunge of sorrows ?

*Por.* Marcus, thou canst not ask what I'd refuse.  
But here, believe me, I've a thousand reasons——

*Marc.* I know thou'lt say my passion's out of season,  
That Cato's great example and misfortunes  
Should both conspire to drive it from my thoughts.  
But what's all this to one that loves like me ?  
O Portius, Portius, from my soul I wish  
Thou didst but know thyself what 'tis to love !  
Then wouldst thou pity and assist thy brother.

*Por.* What should I do ! If I disclose my passion,  
Our friendship's at an end ; if I conceal it,  
The world will call me false to a friend and brother.

[*Aside.*

*Marc.* But see where Lucia, at her wonted hour,  
Amid the cool of yon high marble arch,  
Enjoys the noon-day breeze ! Observe her, Portius ;  
That face, that shape, those eyes, that heav'n of  
beauty !

Observe her well, and blame me if thou canst.



*Por.* She sees us, and advances——

*Marc.* I'll withdraw,

And leave you for a while. Remember, Portius,  
Thy brother's life depends upon thy tongue. [*Exit.*

*Enter LUCIA.*

*Luc.* Did I not see your brother Marcus here?  
Why did he fly the place, and shun my presence?

*Por.* Oh, Lucia, language is too faint to shew  
His rage of love; it preys upon his life;  
He pines, he sickens, he despairs, he dies:  
“ His passions and his virtues lie confus'd  
“ And mixt together in so wild a tumult,  
“ That the whole man is quite disfigur'd in him.  
“ Heav'ns! would one think 'twere possible for love  
“ To make such ravage in a noble soul!”

Oh, Lucia, I'm distress'd; my heart bleeds for him:  
Ev'n now, while thus I stand blest in thy presence,  
A secret damp of grief comes o'er my thoughts,  
And I'm unhappy, though thou smil'st upon me.

*Luc.* How wilt thou guard thy honour in the shock  
Of love and friendship? Think betimes, my Portius,  
Think how the nuptial tie, that might ensure  
Our mutual bliss, would raise to such a height  
Thy brother's griefs, as might perhaps destroy him.

*Por.* Alas, poor youth? What dost thou think, my  
Lucia?

His gen'rous, open, undesigning heart  
Has begg'd his rival to solicit for him:  
Then do not strike him dead with a denial;  
But hold him up in life, and cheer his soul  
With the faint glimm'ring of a doubtful hope;  
Perhaps when we have pass'd these gloomy hours,  
And weather'd out the storm that beats upon us——

*Luc.* No, Portius, no; I see thy sister's tears,  
Thy father's anguish, and thy brother's death,  
In the pursuit of our ill-fated loves:  
And Portius, here I swear, to Heav'n I swear,  
To Heav'n and all the powers that judge mankind,  
Never to mix my plighted hands with thine,  
While such a cloud of mischief hangs upon us,

But to forget our loves, and drive thee out  
From all my thoughts as far—as I am able.

*Por.* What hast thou said? I'm thunderstruck—  
recall

Those hasty words, or I am lost for ever.

*Luc.* Has not the vow already past my lips?  
The gods have heard it, and 'tis seal'd in Heav'n.  
May all the vengeance that was ever pour'd  
On perjur'd heads o'erwhelm me if I break it.

*Por.* Fix'd in astonishment, I gaze upon thee,  
Like one just blasted by a stroke from Heav'n,  
Who pants for breath, and stiffens yet alive,  
In dreadful looks; a monument of wrath!

“ *Luc.* At length I've acted my severest part;  
“ I feel the woman breaking in upon me,  
“ And melt about my heart; my tears will flow.  
“ But, oh, I'll think no more! the hand of Fate  
“ Has torn thee from me, and I must forget thee.

“ *Por.* Hard-hearted, cruel maid!

“ *Luc.* Oh, stop those sounds,  
“ Those killing sounds! Why dost thou frown upon  
“ me?

“ My blood runs cold, my heart forgets to heave,  
“ And life itself goes out at thy displeasure.  
“ The gods forbid us to indulge our loves;  
“ But, oh! I cannot bear thy hate and live.

“ *Por.* Talk not of love; thou never knew'st its  
“ force.

“ I've been deluded, led into a dream  
“ Of fancy'd bliss. Oh, Lucia, cruel maid:  
“ Thy dreadful vow, loaden with death, still sounds  
“ In my stunned ears. What shall I say or do?  
“ Quick let us part! Perdition's in thy presence,  
“ And horror dwells about thee! Ha! she faints!  
“ Wretch that I am, what has my rashness done!  
“ Lucia, thou injur'd innocence! thou best  
“ And loveliest of thy sex! awake, my Lucia,  
“ Or Portius rushes on his sword to join thee.  
“ —Her imprecations reach not to the tomb,  
“ They shut not out society in death—

“ But, ah, she moves, life wanders up and down  
“ Through all her face, and lights up every charm.  
“ *Luc.* Oh, Portius, was this well—to frown on her  
“ That lives upon thy smiles? To call in doubt  
“ The faith of one expiring at thy feet,  
“ That loves thee more than ever woman lov’d?  
“ —What do I say? My half-recovered sense  
“ Forgets the vow in which my soul was bound.  
“ Destruction stands betwixt us: we must part.  
“ *Por.* Name not the word; my frightened thoughts  
“ run back,  
“ And startle into madness at the sound.

*Luc.* “ What wouldst thou have me do? Consider well

“ The train of ills our love would draw behind it.”  
Think, Portius, think thou seest thy dying brother,  
Stabb’d at his heart, and all besmear’d with blood,  
Storming at Heav’n and thee! Thy awful sire  
Sternly demands the cause, th’ accursed cause  
That robs him of his son: poor Marcia trembles,  
Then tears her hair, and frantic in her griefs,  
Calls out on Lucia. What could Lucia answer,  
Or how stand up in such a scene of sorrow?

*Por.* To my confusion and eternal grief,  
I must approve the sentence that destroys me.  
“ The mist that hung upon my mind, clears up;  
“ And now, athwart the terrors that thy vow  
“ Has planted round thee, thou appear’st most fair,  
“ More amiable, and risest in thy charms.  
“ Loveliest of women! Heav’n is in thy soul;  
“ Beauty and virtue shine for ever round thee,  
“ Bright’ning each other: thou art all divine.”

*Luc.* Portius, no more; thy words shout through  
my heart,

Melt my resolves, and turn me all to love.  
Why are those tears of fondness in thy eyes?  
Why heaves thy heart? Why swells thy soul with  
sorrow?

It softens me too much—farewell, my Portius;  
Farewell, though death is in the word—for ever.

*Por.* Stay, Lucia, stay! What dost thou say? For ever?

*Luc.* Have I not sworn? If, Portius, thy success  
Must throw thy brother on his fate, farewell—  
Oh, how shall I repeat the word! for ever.

*Por.* “Thus o’er the dying lamp th’ unsteady flame  
“ Hangs quiv’ring on a point, leaps off by fits,  
“ And falls again, as loth to quit its hold.”  
—Thou must not go; my soul still hovers o’er thee,  
And can’t get loose.

*Luc.* If the firm Portius shake  
To hear of parting, think what Lucia suffers!

*Por.* ’Tis true, unruffled and serene, I’ve met  
The common accidents of life; but here  
Such an unlook’d for storm of ills fall on me,  
It beats down all my strength. I cannot bear it.  
We must not part.

*Luc.* What dost thou say? Not part!  
Hast thou forgot the vow that I have made?  
Are not there heav’ns and gods that thunder o’er us?  
—But see, thy brother Marcus bends this way:  
I sicken at the sight. Once more, farewell,  
Farewell, and know thou wrong’st me, if thou think’st  
Ever was love, or ever grief like mine. [*Exit Lucia.*

*Enter* MARCUS.

*Marc.* Portius, what hopes? How stands she? Am  
I doom’d  
To life or death?

*Por.* What would’st thou have me say?

*Marc.* What means this pensive posture? Thou  
appear’st  
Like one amaz’d and terrify’d.

*Por.* I’ve reason.

*Marc.* Thy down-cast looks, and thy disorder’d  
thoughts,  
Tell me my fate. I ask’d not the success  
My cause has found.

*Por.* I’m griev’d I undertook it.

*Marc.* What? does the barbarous maid insult my  
heart,  
My aching heart, and triumph in my pains?

That I could cast her from my thoughts for ever!

*Por.* Away, you're too suspicious in your griefs;  
Lucia, though sworn never to think of love,  
Compassionates your pains, and pities you.

*Marc.* Compassionates my pains, and pities me!  
What is compassion, when 'tis void of love?  
Fool that I was to choose so cold a friend  
To urge my cause!——Compassionates my pains!  
Pry'thee, what art, what rhet'ric didst thou use  
To gain this mighty boon?—She pities me!  
To one that asks the warm returns of love,  
Compassion's cruelty, 'tis scorn, 'tis death!——

*Por.* Marcus, no more, have I deserved this treatment?

*Marc.* What have I said! Oh, Portius, oh, forgive me!

A soul exasperated in ills falls out  
With every thing, its friend, itself—but hah!  
What means that shout, big with the sounds of war?  
What new alarm?

*Por.* A second, louder yet,  
Swells in the wind, and comes more full upon us.

*Marc.* Oh, for some glorious cause to fall in battle!  
Lucia, thou hast undone me; thy disdain  
Has broke my heart: 'tis death must give me ease.

*Por.* Quick, let us hence. Who knows if Cato's  
life

Stands sure? Oh, Marcus, I am warm'd; my heart  
Leaps at the trumpet's voice, and burns for glory.

[*Exeunt.*

*Enter SEMPRONIUS, with the Leaders of the Mutiny.*

*Sem.* At length the winds are rais'd, the storm  
blows high;

Be it your care, my friends, to keep it up  
In its full fury, and direct it right,  
Till it has spent itself on Cato's head.

Meanwhile, I'll herd amongst his friends, and seem  
One of the number, that whate'er arrive,  
My friends and fellow-soldiers may be safe. [*Exit.*

*1st Lead.* We are all safe, Sempronius is our friend.

Sempronius is as brave a man as Cato.

But hark ! he enters. Bear up boldly to him :

Be sure you beat him down, and bind him fast.

This day will end our toils, and give us rest :

Fear nothing, for Sempronius is our friend.

*Re-enter SEMPRONIUS, with CATO, LUCIUS,  
PORTIUS, and MARCUS.*

*Cato.* Where are those bold intrepid sons of war,  
That greatly turn their backs upon their foe,  
And to their general send a brave defiance ?

*Sem.* Curse on their dastard souls, they stand asto-  
nish'd. *[Aside.*

*Cato.* Perfidious men ! And will you thus dishonour  
Your past exploits, and sully all your wars ?  
Do you confess 'twas not a zeal for Rome,  
Nor love of liberty, nor thirst of honour,  
Drew you thus far ; but hopes to share the spoil  
Of conquer'd towns, and plunder'd provinces ?  
Fir'd with such motives, you do well to join  
With Cato's foes, and follow Cæsar's banners.  
Why did I 'scape th' envenom'd aspic's rage,  
And all the fiery monsters of the desert,  
To see this day ? Why could not Cato fall  
Without your guilt ? Behold, ungrateful men,  
Behold my bosom naked to your swords,  
And let the man that's injur'd strike the blow.  
Which of you all suspects that he is wrong'd ?  
Or thinks he suffers greater ills than Cato ?  
Am I distinguished from you but by toils,  
Superior toils, and heavier weight of cares ?  
Painful pre-eminence !

*Sem.* By Heav'ns they droop !  
Confusion to the villains ; all is lost. *[Aside.*

*Cato.* Have you forgotten Lybia's burning waste,  
Its barren rocks, parch'd earth, and hills of sand,  
Its tainted air, and all its broods of poison ?  
Who was the first to explore th' untrodden path,  
When life was hazarded in every step ?  
Or, fainting in the long laborious march,  
When on the banks of an unlook'd for stream



You sunk the river with repeated draughts,  
Who was the last of all your host that thirsted?

*Sem.* If some penurious source by chance appear'd,  
Scanty of waters, when you scoop'd it dry,  
And offer'd the full helmet up to Cato,  
Did he not dash th' untasted moisture from him?  
Did he not lead you through the mid-day sun,  
And clouds of dust? Did not his temples glow  
In the same sultry winds, and scorching heats?

*Cato.* Hence, worthless men! hence! and complain to Cæsar,  
You could not undergo the toil of war,  
Nor bear the hardships that your leader bore.

*Lucius.* See, Cato, see the unhappy men; they weep;  
Fear and remorse, and sorrow for their crime,  
Appear in every look, and plead for mercy.

*Cato.* Learn to be honest men, give up your leaders,  
And pardon shall descend on all the rest.

*Sem.* Cato, commit these wretches to my care:  
First let 'em each be broken on the rack,  
Then, with what life remains, impal'd and left  
To writhe at leisure round the bloody stake,  
There let 'em hang, and taint the southern wind.  
The partners of their crime will learn obedience,  
When they look up and see their fellow-traitors  
Stuck on a fork, and black'ning in the sun.

"*Luc.* Sempronius, why, why wilt thou urge the  
" fate

" Of wretched men?

" *Sem.* How! wouldst thou clear rebellion?

" *Lucius* (good man) pities the poor offenders

" That would imbrue their hands in Cato's blood."

*Cato.* Forbear, Sempronius!—see they suffer death,  
But in their deaths remember they are men;  
Strain not the laws to make their tortures grievous.  
Lucius, the base degenerate age requires  
Severity, and justice in its rigour:  
This awes an impious, bold, offending world,  
Commands obedience, and gives force to laws.  
When by just vengeance guilty mortals perish,

The gods behold the punishment with pleasure,  
And lay th' uplifted thunderbolt aside.

*Sem.* Cato, I execute thy will with pleasure.

*Cato.* Meanwhile we'll sacrifice to Liberty.  
Remember, O my friends, the laws, the rights,  
The gen'rous plan of pow'r deliver'd down  
From age to age, by your renown'd forefathers,  
(So dearly bought, the price of so much blood :)  
Oh, let it never perish in your hands !  
But piously transmit it to your children.  
Do thou, great Liberty, inspire our souls,  
And make our lives in thy possession happy,  
Or our deaths glorious in thy just defence.

[*Exeunt Cato, &c.*]

*1st Lead.* Sempronius, you have acted like yourself.  
One would have thought you had been half in earnest.

*Sem.* Villain, stand off, base, grov'ling, worthless  
wretches,

Mongrels in faction, poor faint-hearted traitors !

*2d Lead.* Nay, now you carry it too far, Sempronius;  
Throw off the mask, there are none here but friends.

*Sem.* Know, villains, when such paltry slaves pre-  
sume

To mix in treason, if the plot succeeds,  
They're thrown neglected by : but if it fails,  
They're sure to die like dogs, as you shall do.  
Here, take these factious monsters, drag 'em forth  
To sudden death.

*1st Lead.* Nay, since it comes to this—

*Sem.* Dispatch 'em quick ; but first pluck out their  
tongues,  
Lest with their dying breath they sow sedition.

[*Exeunt guards with their leaders.*]

*Enter* SYPHAX.

*Syph.* Our first design, my friend, has prov'd abortive:  
Still there remains an after-game to play ;  
My troops are mounted ; their Numidian steeds  
Snuff up the wind, and long to scour the desert :  
Let but Sempronius head us in our flight,  
We'll force the gate where Marcus keeps his guard,

And hew down all that would oppose our passage.

A day will bring us into Cæsar's camp.

*Sem.* Confusion ! I have fail'd of half my purpose :  
Marcia, the charming Marcia's left behind !

*Syph.* How ! will Sempronius turn a woman's slave ?

*Sem.* Think not thy friend can ever feel the soft  
Unmanly warmth and tenderness of love.

Syphax, I long to clasp that haughty maid,  
And bend her stubborn virtue to my passion :

When I have gone thus far, I'd cast her off.

*Syph.* Well said ! that's spoken like thyself, Sem-  
pronius.

What hinders, then, but that thou find her out,  
And hurry her away by manly force.

*Sem.* But how to gain admission ? For access  
Is given to none but Juba, and her brothers.

*Syph.* Thou shalt have Juba's dress, and Juba's  
guards.

The doors will open when Numidia's prince  
Seems to appear before the slaves that watch them.

*Sem.* Heav'ns, what a thought is there ! Marcia's  
my own !

How will my bosom swell with anxious joy,  
When I behold her struggling in my arms,  
With glowing beauty, and disorder'd charms,  
While fear and anger, with alternate grace,  
Pant in her breast, and vary in her face !  
So Pluto, seiz'd of Proserpine, convey'd  
To Hell's tremendous gloom th' affrighted maid,  
There grimly smil'd, pleas'd with the beauteous prize,  
Nor envied Jove his sunshine and his skies. [*Exeunt.*]

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## ACT IV. SCENE I.

*Enter LUCIA and MARCIA.*

*Lucia.* Now tell me, Marcia, tell me from thy soul,  
If thou believ'st 'tis possible for woman  
To suffer greater ills than Lucia suffers.

*Mar.* Oh, Lucia, Lucia, might my big swoln heart  
Vent all its griefs, and give a loose to sorrow,

Marcia could answer thee in sighs, keep pace  
With all thy woes, and count out tear for tear.

*Luc.* I know thou'rt doom'd alike to be belov'd  
By Juba, and thy father's friend, Sempronius:  
But which of these has pow'r to charm like Portius!

*Mar.* Still I must beg thee not to name Sempronius.  
Lucia, I like not that loud boist'rous man;  
Juba, to all the bravery of a hero,  
Adds softest love, and more than female sweetness;  
Juba might make the proudest of her sex,  
Any of womankind, but Marcia, happy.

*Luc.* And why not Marcia? Come, you strive in  
vain

To hide your thoughts from one who knows too well  
The inward glowings of a heart in love.

*Mar.* While Cato lives, his daughter has no right  
To love or hate, but as his choice directs.

*Luc.* But should this father give you to Sempronius?

*Mar.* I dare not think he will: but if he should—  
Why wilt thou add to all the griefs I suffer,  
Imaginary ills, and fancy'd tortures?  
I hear the sound of feet—They march this way!  
Let us retire, and try if we can drown  
Each softer thought in sense of present danger:  
When love once pleads admission to our hearts,  
In spite of all the virtue we can boast  
The woman that deliberates is lost. [*Exeunt.*

*Enter SEMPRONIUS, dressed like JUBA, with Numi-  
dian guards.*

*Sem.* The deer is lodg'd, I've track'd her to her  
covert.

Be sure you mind the word; and when I give it,  
Rush in at once, and seize upon your prey.  
Let not her cries or tears have force to move you.  
—How will the young Numidian rave to see  
His mistress lost! If ought could glad my soul,  
Beyond th' enjoyment of so bright a prize,  
'Twould be to torture that young gay barbarian.  
—But hark! what noise! Death to my hopes! 'tis he,  
'Tis Juba's self! there is but one way left—

He must be murder'd, and a passage cut  
Through those his guards——Hah, dastards, do you  
tremble!——

Or act like men, or by yon azure heaven——

*Enter JUBA.*

*Jub.* What do I see? Who's this, that dares usurp  
The guards and habit of Numidia's prince?

*Sem.* One that was born to scourge thy arrogance,  
Presumptuous youth!

*Jub.* What can this mean? Sempronius!

*Sem.* My sword shall answer thee. Have at thy  
heart.

*Jub.* Nay, then beware thy own, proud, barbarous  
man. [*Sem. falls. His guards surrender.*]

*Sem.* Curse on my stars! Am I then doom'd to fall  
By a boy's hand, disfigur'd in a vile  
Numidian dress, and for a worthless woman?  
Gods, I'm distracted! This my close of life!  
Oh, for a peal of thunder that would make  
Earth, sea, and air, and Heaven, and Cato tremble!

[*Dies.*]

*Jub.* With what a spring his furious soul broke  
loose,

And left the limbs still quiv'ring on the ground!  
Hence let us carry off those slaves to Cato,  
That we may there at length unravel all  
This dark design, this mystery of fate.

[*Exit Juba, with Prisoners, &c.*]

*Enter LUCIA and MARCIA.*

*Luc.* Sure 'twas the clash of swords; my troubled  
heart

Is so cast down, and sunk amidst its sorrows,  
It throbs with fear, and aches at every sound.  
Oh, Marcia, should thy brothers, for my sake—  
I die away with horror at the thought.

*Mar.* See, Lucia, see! here's blood! here's blood  
and murder!

Hah! a Numidian! Heav'n preserve the prince!  
The face lies muffled up within the garment—  
But, hah, death to my sight! a diadem

And royal robes! O gods! 'tis he, 'tis he!

"Juba, the loveliest youth that ever warm'd

"A virgin's heart," Juba lies dead before us!

*Luc.* Now, Marcia, now call up to thy assistance  
Thy wonted strength and constancy of mind,  
Thou canst not put it to a greater trial.

*Mar.* Lucia, look there, and wonder at my patience;  
Have I not cause to rave, and beat my breast,  
To rend my heart with grief, and run distracted!

*Luc.* What can I think or say to give thee comfort?

*Mar.* Talk not of comfort, 'tis for lighter ills:  
Behold a sight that strikes all comfort dead.

*Enter JUBA, listening.*

I will indulge my sorrows, and give way  
To all the pangs and fury of despair;  
That man, that best of men, deserv'd it from me.

*Jub.* What do I hear? And was the false Sempronius

That best of men? Oh, had I fall'n like him,  
And cou'd have been thus mourn'd, I had been happy.

"*Luc.* Here will I stand, companion in thy woes,  
"And help thee with my tears; when I behold  
"A loss like thine, I half forget my own.

"*Mar.* 'Tis not in fate to ease my tortur'd breast.  
"This empty world, to me a joyless desert,  
"Has nothing left to make poor Marcia happy.

"*Jub.* I'm on the rack! Was he so near her heart?

"*Mar.* Oh, he was all made up of love and charms!  
"Whatever maid could wish, or man admire:  
"Delight of every eye; when he appear'd,  
"A secret pleasure gladden'd all that saw him;  
"But when he talk'd, the proudest Roman blush'd  
"To hear his virtues, and old age grew worse.

"*Jub.* I shall run mad——"

*Mar.* Oh, Juba! Juba! Juba!

*Jub.* What means that voice? Did she not call on  
Juba?

*Mar.* "Why do I think on what he was! he's dead!  
"He's dead, and never knew how much I lov'd him."  
Lucia, who knows but his poor bleeding heart,



Amidst its agonies, remember'd Marcia,  
And the last words he utter'd, call'd me cruel!  
Alas! he knew not, hapless youth, he knew not  
Marcia's whole soul was full of love and Juba!

*Jub.* Where am I? Do I live? or am indeed  
What Marcia thinks? All is Elysium round me!

*Mar.* Ye dear remains of the most lov'd of men,  
Nor modesty nor virtue here forbid  
A last embrace, while thus——

*Jub.* See, Marcia, see [*Throwing himself before her.*]  
The happy Juba lives! He lives to catch  
That dear embrace, and to return it too  
With mutual warmth and eagerness of love.

*Mar.* With pleasure and amaze I stand transported!  
“Sure 'tis a dream! dead and alive at once!”  
If thou art Juba, who lies there?

*Jub.* A wretch,  
Disguis'd like Juba on a curs'd design.  
“The tale is long, nor have I heard it out:  
“Thy father knows it all.” I could not bear  
To leave thee in the neighbourhood of death,  
But flew, in all the haste of love to find thee;  
I found thee weeping, and confess this once,  
Am rapt with joy to see my Marcia's tears.

*Mar.* I've been surpriz'd in an unguarded hour,  
But must not now go back; the love that lay  
Half smother'd in my breast, has broke through all  
Its weak restraints, and burns in its full lustre.  
I cannot, if I would, conceal it from thee.

“*Jub.* I'm lost in ecstasy; and dost thou love,  
“Thou charming maid——

“*Mar.* And dost thou live to ask it?

“*Jub.* This, this is life indeed? life worth pre-  
“serving,

“Such life as Juba never felt till now!

“*Mar.* Believe me, prince, before I thought thee  
“dead,

“I did not know myself how much I lov'd thee.

“*Jub.* Oh, fortunate mistake!

“*Mar.* O happy Marcia!”

*Jub.* My joy, my best belov'd, my only wish!  
How shall I speak the transport of my soul!

*Mar.* Lucia, thy arm. "Oh, let me rest upon it!"  
"The vital blood that had forsook my heart,  
"Returns again in such tumultuous tides,  
"It quite o'ercomes me." Lead to my apartment—  
Oh, prince, I blush to think what I have said,  
But fate has wrested the confession from me;  
Go on, and prosper in the paths of honour.  
Thy virtue will excuse my passion for thee,  
And make the gods propitious to our love.

[*Ereunt Mar. and Luc.*]

*Jub.* I am so blest, I fear 'tis all a dream.  
Fortune, thou now hast made amends for all  
Thy past unkindness: I absolve my stars.  
What though Numidia add her conquer'd towns  
And provinces to swell the victor's triumph,  
Juba will never at his fate repine:  
Let Cæsar have the world, if Marcia's mine. [*Erit.*]

*A March at a Distance. Enter CATO and LUCIUS.*

*Luc.* I stand astonish'd! What, the bold Sempronius,  
That still broke foremost thro' the crowd of patriots,  
As with a hurricane of zeal transported,  
And virtuous even to madness—

*Cato.* Trust me, Lucius,  
Our civil discords have produc'd such crimes,  
Such monstrous crimes! I am surpris'd at nothing,  
—Oh, Lucius, I am sick of this bad world!  
The day-light and the sun grow painful to me.

*Enter PORTIUS.*

But see where Portius comes: what means this haste?  
Why are thy looks thus chang'd?

*Por.* My heart is griev'd,  
I bring such news as will afflict my father.

*Cato.* Has Cæsar shed more human blood?

*Por.* Not so.

The traitor Syphax, as within the square  
He exercis'd his troops, the signal given,  
Flew off at once with his Numidian horse  
To the South gate, where Marcus holds the watch;

I saw, and call'd to stop him, but in vain:  
He toss'd his arm aloft, and proudly told me,  
He would not stay and perish like Sempronius.

*Cato.* Perfidious man! But haste, my son, and see  
Thy brother Marcus acts a Roman's part. [*Ex. Por.*  
—Lucius, the torrent bears too hard upon me:  
Justice gives way to force: the conquer'd world  
Is Cæsar's! Cato has no business in it.

*Luc.* While pride, oppression, and injustice reign,  
'The world will still demand her Cato's presence.  
In pity to mankind submit to Cæsar,  
And reconcile thy mighty soul to life.

*Cato.* Would Lucius have me live to swell the  
number  
Of Cæsar's slaves, or by a base submission  
Give up the cause of Rome, and own a tyrant?

*Luc.* The victor never will impose on Cato  
Ungenerous terms. His enemies confess  
'The virtues of humanity are Cæsar's.

*Cato.* Curse on his virtues! they've undone his  
country.

Such popular humanity is treason——  
But see young Juba; the good youth appears  
Full of the guilt of his perfidious subjects!

*Luc.* Alas, poor prince! his fate deserves compassion.

*Enter JUBA.*

*Jub.* I blush, and am confounded to appear  
Before thy presence, Cato.

*Cato.* What's thy crime?

*Jub.* I'm a Numidian.

*Cato.* And a brave one too. Thou hast a Roman  
soul.

*Jub.* Hast thou not heard of my false countrymen?

*Cato.* Alas, young prince! falsehood and fraud shoot  
up in every soil,

'The product of all climes—Rome has its Cæsars.

*Jub.* 'Tis generous thus to comfort the distress'd.

*Cato.* 'Tis just to give applause where 'tis deserv'd;  
'Thy virtue, prince, has stood the test of fortune,  
Like purest gold, that, tortur'd in the furnace,

Comes out more bright, and brings forth all its weight.

*Jub.* What shall I answer thee? "My ravish'd heart  
"O'erflows with secret joy:" I'd rather gain  
Thy praise, O Cato! than Numidia's empire.

*Enter* PORTIUS.

*Por.* Misfortune on misfortune! grief on grief!  
My brother Marcus——

*Cato.* Hah! what has he done?  
Has he forsook his post? Has he given way?  
Did he look tamely on, and let 'em pass?

*Por.* Scarce had I left my father, but I met him  
Borne on the shields of his surviving soldiers,  
Breathless and pale, and cover'd o'er with wounds,  
Long, at the head of his few faithful friends,  
He stood the shock of a whole host of foes,  
Till obstinately brave, and bent on death,  
Oppress'd with multitudes, he greatly fell.

*Cato.* I'm satisfy'd.

*Por.* Nor did he fall before  
His sword had pierc'd through the false heart of  
Syphax.

Yonder he lies. I saw the hoary traitor  
Grin in the pangs of death, and bite the ground.

*Cato.* Thanks to the gods, my boy has done his duty.  
—Portius, when I am dead, be sure you place  
His urn near mine.

*Por.* Long may they keep asunder.

*Luc.* Oh, Cato, arm thy soul with all its patience;  
See where the corpse of thy dead son approaches!  
The citizens and senators, alarm'd,  
Have gather'd round it, and attend it weeping.

*CATO, meeting the Corpse.*

*Cato.* Welcome, my son! Here lay him down, my  
friends,  
Full in my sight, that I may view at leisure  
The bloody corse, and count those glorious wounds.  
—How beautiful is death, when earn'd by virtue!  
Who would not be that youth? What pity is it  
That we can die but once to serve our country?  
—Why sits this sadness on your brows, my friends?

I should have blush'd if Cato's house had stood  
Secure, and flourish'd in a civil war.

—Portius, behold thy brother, and remember  
Thy life is not thy own, when Rome demands it.

*Jub.* Was ever man like this!

*Cato* Alas, my friends,

Why mourn you thus! let not a private loss  
Afflict your hearts. 'Tis Rome requires our tears,  
The mistress of the world, the seat of empire,  
The nurse of heroes, the delight of gods,  
That humbled the proud tyrants of the earth,  
And set the nations free, Rome is no more.  
Oh, liberty! Oh, virtue! Oh, my country!

*Jub.* Behold that upright man! Rome fills his eyes  
With tears that flow'd not o'er his own dead son.

[*Aside.*

*Cato.* Whate'er the Roman virtue has subdu'd,  
The sun's whole course, the day and year are Cæsar's:  
For him the self-devoted Decii dy'd,  
The Fabii fell, and the great Scipio's conquer'd;  
Ev'n Pompey fought for Cæsar. Oh, my friends,  
How is the toil of fate, the work of ages,  
The Roman empire fall'n! Oh, curst ambition!  
Fall'n into Cæsar's hand! Our great forefathers  
Had left him nought to conquer but his country.

*Jub.* While Cato lives Cæsar will blush to see  
Mankind enslav'd, and be asham'd of empire.

*Cato.* Cæsar asham'd! has he not seen Pharsalia!

*Luc.* Cato, 'tis time thou save thyself and us.

*Cato.* Lose not a thought on me, I'm out of danger,  
Heav'n will not leave me in the victor's hand.  
Cæsar shall never say he conquer'd Cato.

But, oh, my friends! your safety fills my heart  
With anxious thoughts: a thousand secret terrors  
Rise in my soul. How shall I save my friends?  
'Tis now, O Cæsar, I begin to fear thee!

*Luc.* Cæsar has mercy if we ask it of him.

*Cato.* Then ask it, I conjure you! let him know  
Whate'er was done against him, Cato did it.  
Add, if you please, that I request it of him,

“ That I myself, with tears request it of him,”  
The virtue of my friends may pass unpunish’d.  
Juba, my heart is troubled for thy sake.  
Should I advise thee to regain Numidia,  
Or seek the conqueror?—

*Jub.* If I forsake thee  
Whilst I have life, may Heav’n abandon Juba !  
*Cato.* Thy virtues, prince, if I foresee aright,  
Will one day make thee great ; at Rome hereafter,  
’Twill be no crime to have been Cato’s friend.  
Portius, draw near : my son, thou oft has seen  
Thy sire engag’d in a corrupted state,  
Wrestling with vice and faction : now thou see’st me  
Spent, overpower’d, despairing of success ;  
Let me advise thee to retreat betimes  
To thy paternal seat, the Sabine field.  
Where the great Censor toil’d with his own hands,  
And all our frugal ancestors were bless’d  
In humble virtues, and a rural life ;  
There live retir’d, pray for the peace of Rome ;  
Content thyself to be obscurely good.  
When vice prevails, and impious men bear sway,  
The post of honour is a private station.

*Por.* I hope my father does not recommend  
A life to Portius that he scorns himself.

*Cato.* Farewell, my friends ! If there be any of you  
Who dare not trust the victor’s clemency,  
Know there are ships prepar’d by my command  
(Their sails already op’ning to the winds),  
That shall convey you to the wish’d-for port.  
Is there aught else, my friends, I can do for you ?  
The conqueror draws near. Once more farewell !  
If e’er we meet hereafter, we shall meet  
In happier climes, and on a safer shore,  
Where Cæsar never shall approach us more.

[*Pointing to his dead son.*

There the brave youth, with love of virtue fir’d,  
Who greatly in his country’s cause expir’d,  
Shall know he conquer’d. The firm patriot there  
Who made the welfare of mankind his care,



Though still by faction, vice, and fortune crost,  
Shall find the gen'rous labour was not lost. [*Exeunt.*]

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ACT V. SCENE I.

CATO *solus*, sitting in a thoughtful posture: in his hand Plato's book on the immortality of the soul.

*A drawn sword on the table by him.*

It must be so—Plato, thou reason'st well—  
Else whence this pleasing hope, this fond desire,  
This longing after immortality?  
Or whence this secret dread, and inward horror,  
Of falling into nought? Why shrinks the soul  
Back on herself, and startles at destruction?  
'Tis the divinity that stirs within us;  
'Tis Heav'n itself that points out an hereafter,  
And intimates eternity to man.  
Eternity! thou pleasing, dreadful thought!  
Through what variety of untry'd being,  
Through what new scenes and changes must we pass?  
The wide, th' unbounded prospect lies before me;  
But shadows, clouds, and darkness rest upon it.  
Here will I hold. If there's a Power above,  
(And that there is all nature cries aloud  
Through all her works) he must delight in virtue;  
And that which he delights in must be happy.  
But when! or where—this world was made for Cæsar.  
I'm weary of conjectures—this must end 'em.

[*Laying his hand on his sword.*]

Thus am I doubly arm'd: my death and life,  
My bane and antidote, are both before me.  
This in a moment brings me to an end;  
But this informs me I shall never die.  
The soul, secur'd in her existence, smiles  
At the drawn dagger, and defies its point.  
The stars shall fade away, the sun himself  
Grow dim with age, and nature sink in years;  
But thou shalt flourish in immortal youth,  
Unhurt amidst the war of elements,  
The wreck of matter, and the crush of worlds.

What means this heaviness that hangs upon me?  
'This lethargy that creeps through all my senses?  
Nature oppress'd, and harass'd out with care,  
Sinks down to rest. This once I'll favour her,  
That my awaken'd soul may take her flight,  
Renew'd in all her strength, and fresh with life,  
An offering fit for Heav'n. Let guilt or fear  
Disturb man's rest, Cato knows neither of 'em,  
Indifferent in his choice to sleep or die.

*Enter* PORTIUS.

But hah! who's this? my son! Why this intrusion?  
Were not my orders that I would be private?  
Why am I disobey'd?

*Por.* Alas, my father!

What means this sword, this instrument of death?  
Let me convey it hence.

*Cato.* Rash youth, forbear!

*Por.* Oh, let the pray'rs, th' entreaties of your  
friends,

Their tears, their common danger, wrest it from you!

*Cato.* Would'st thou betray me? Wouldst thou  
give me up

A slave, a captive into Cæsar's hands?

Retire, and learn obedience to a father,

Or know, young man!——

*Por.* Look not thus sternly on me;  
You know I'd rather die than disobey you.

*Cato.* 'Tis well! again I'm master of myself.

Now, Cæsar, let thy troops beset our gates,

And bar each avenue; thy gath'ring fleets

O'erspread the sea, and stop up every port;

Cato shall open to himself a passage,

And mock thy hopes——

*Por.* Oh, sir! forgive your son,  
Whose grief hangs heavy on him. Oh, my father!  
How am I sure it is not the last time  
I e'er shall call you so! Be not displeas'd,  
Oh, be not angry with me whilst I weep,  
And, in the anguish of my heart, beseech you  
To quit the dreadful purpose of your soul!

*Cato.* Thou hast been ever good and dutiful.

[*Embracing him.*

Weep not, my son, all will be well again ;  
The righteous gods, whom I have sought to please,  
Will succour Cato, and preserve his children.

*Por.* Your words give comfort to my drooping heart.

*Cato.* Portius, thou may'st rely upon my conduct :  
Thy father will not act what misbecomes him.

But go, my son, and see if aught be wanting  
Among thy father's friends ; see them embark'd,  
And tell me if the winds and seas befriend them.  
My soul is quite weigh'd down with care, and asks  
The soft refreshment of a moment's sleep.

*Por.* My thoughts are more at ease, my heart re-  
vives.

[*Exit Cato.*

*Enter MARCIA.*

Oh, Marcia ! Oh, my sister, still there's hope !  
Our father will not cast away a life  
So needful to us all and to his country.  
He is retir'd to rest, and seems to cherish  
Thoughts full of peace. He has dispatch'd me hence  
With orders that bespeak a mind compos'd,  
And studious for the safety of his friends.

Marcia, take care that none disturb his slumbers. [*Ex.*

*Mar.* Oh, ye immortal pow'rs ! that guard the just,  
Watch round his couch, and soften his repose,  
Banish his sorrows, and becalm his soul  
With easy dreams ; remember all his virtues,  
And shew mankind that goodness is your care.

*Enter LUCIA.*

*Luc.* Where is your father, Marcia, where is Cato ?

*Mar.* Lucia, speak low ; he is retir'd to rest.

Lucia, I feel a gentle dawning hope  
Rise in my soul. We shall be happy still.

*Luc.* Alas ! I tremble when I think on Cato !  
In every view, in every thought I tremble !  
Cato is stern and awful as a god ;  
He knows not how to wink at human frailty,  
Or pardon weakness that he never felt.

*Mar.* Though stern and awful to the foes of Rome,

He is all goodness, Lucia, always mild,  
 " Compassionate and gentle to his friends,  
 " Fill'd with domestic tenderness, the best,"  
 The kindest father I have ever found him,  
 Easy and good, and bounteous to my wishes.

*Luc.* 'Tis his consent alone can make us bless'd;  
 Marcia, we both are equally involv'd  
 In the same intricate, perplex'd distress.  
 The cruel hand of fate that has destroy'd  
 Thy brother Marcus, whom we both lament—

*Mar.* And ever shall lament—unhappy youth!

*Luc.* Has set my soul at large, and now I stand  
 Loose of my vow. But who knows Cato's thoughts;  
 Who knows how yet he may dispose of Portius,  
 Or how he has determin'd of thyself?

*Mar.* Let him but live, commit the rest to Heav'n.

*Enter LUCIUS.*

*Lucius.* Sweet are the slumbers of the virtuous man!  
 Oh, Marcia, I have seen thy godlike father!  
 Some power invisible supports his soul,  
 And bears it up in all its wonted greatness.  
 A kind refreshing sleep is fall'n upon him:  
 I saw him stretch'd at ease, his fancy lost  
 In pleasing dreams; as I drew near his couch,  
 He smil'd, and cried, Cæsar, thou canst not hurt me.

*Mar.* His mind still labours with some dreadful  
 thought.

" *Lucius.* Lucia, why all this grief, these floods of  
 " sorrow?

" Dry up thy tears, my child; we all are safe

" While Cato lives—his presence will protect us."

*Enter JUBA.*

*Jub.* Lucius, the horsemen are return'd from view-  
 ing

The number, strength, and posture of our foes,  
 Who now encamp within a short hour's march:  
 On the high point of yon bright western tower  
 We ken them from afar; the setting sun  
 Plays on their shining arms and burnish'd helmets,  
 And covers all the field with gleams of fire.

*Lucius.* Marcia, 'tis time we should awake thy father.  
Cæsar is still dispos'd to give us terms,  
And waits at distance till he hears from Cato.

*Enter* PORTIUS.

Portius, thy looks speak somewhat of importance.  
What tidings dost thou bring? Methinks I see  
Unusual gladness sparkling in thy eyes.

*Por.* As I was hasting to the port, where now  
My father's friends, impatient for a passage,  
Accuse the ling'ring winds, a sail arriv'd  
From Pompey's son, who through the realms of Spain  
Calls out for vengeance on his father's death,  
And rouses the whole nation up to arms.  
Were Cato at their head, once more might Rome  
Assert her rights, and claim her liberty.  
But, hark! what means that groan! Oh, give me way,  
And let me fly into my father's presence. [*Exit.*

*Lucius.* Cato, amidst his slumbers, thinks on Rome,  
And in the wild disorder of his soul  
Mourns o'er his country. Hah! a second groan—  
Heav'n guard us all!—

*Mar.* Alas! 'tis not the voice  
Of one who sleeps; 'tis agonizing pain,  
'Tis death is in that sound;—

*Re-enter* PORTIUS.

*Por.* Oh, sight of woe!  
Oh, Marcia, what we fear'd is come to pass!  
Cato is fallen upon his sword.—

*Lucius.* Oh, Portius,  
Hide all the horrors of thy mournful tale,  
And let us guess the rest.

*Por.* I've rais'd him up,  
And plac'd him in his chair, where, pale and faint,  
He gasps for breath, and as his life flows from him,  
Demands to see his friends. His servants weeping,  
Obsequious to his order, bear him hither.

*Mar.* Oh, Heav'n! assist me in this dreadful hour,  
'To pay the last sad duties to my father.

*“ Jub.* These are thy triumphs, thy exploits, O  
“ Cæsar!

“ *Lucius*. Now is Rome fall'n indeed !”

[*Cato brought in on a chair.*

*Cato*. Here set me down—

*Portius*, come near me—Are my friends embark'd?  
Can any thing be thought of for their service?

Whilst I yet live, let me not live in vain.

—Oh, *Lucius*, art thou here?—Thou art too good—

Let this our friendship live between our children,

Make *Portius* happy in thy daughter *Lucia*.

Alas ! poor man, he weeps !—*Marcia*, my daughter—

Oh, bend me forward !—*Juba* loves thee, *Marcia*.

A senator of Rome, while Rome surviv'd,

Would not have match'd his daughter with a king,

But *Cæsar's* arms have thrown down all distinction ;

Whoe'er is brave and virtuous is a Roman—

—I'm sick to death—Oh, when shall I get loose

From this vain world, th' abode of guilt and sorrow ?

—And yet, methinks, a beam of light breaks in

On my departing soul. Alas, I fear

I've been too hasty. Oh, ye Powers, that search

The heart of man, and weigh his inmost thoughts,

If I have done amiss, impute it not !—

The best may err ; but you are good, and—Oh ! [*Dies.*

*Lucius*. There fled the greatest soul that ever warm'd

A Roman breast ; oh, *Cato* ! oh, my friend !

Thy will shall be religiously observ'd.

But let us bear this awful corpse to *Cæsar*,

And lay it in his sight, that it may stand

A fence betwixt us and the victor's wrath ;

*Cato*, though dead, shall still protect his friends.

From hence let fierce contending nations know

What dire effects from civil discord flow :

'Tis this that shakes our country with alarms,

And gives up Rome a prey to Roman arms,

Produces fraud, and cruelty, and strife,

And robs the guilty world of *Cato's* life.

[*Exeunt omnes.*



## EPILOGUE.

WRITTEN BY DR. GARTH.

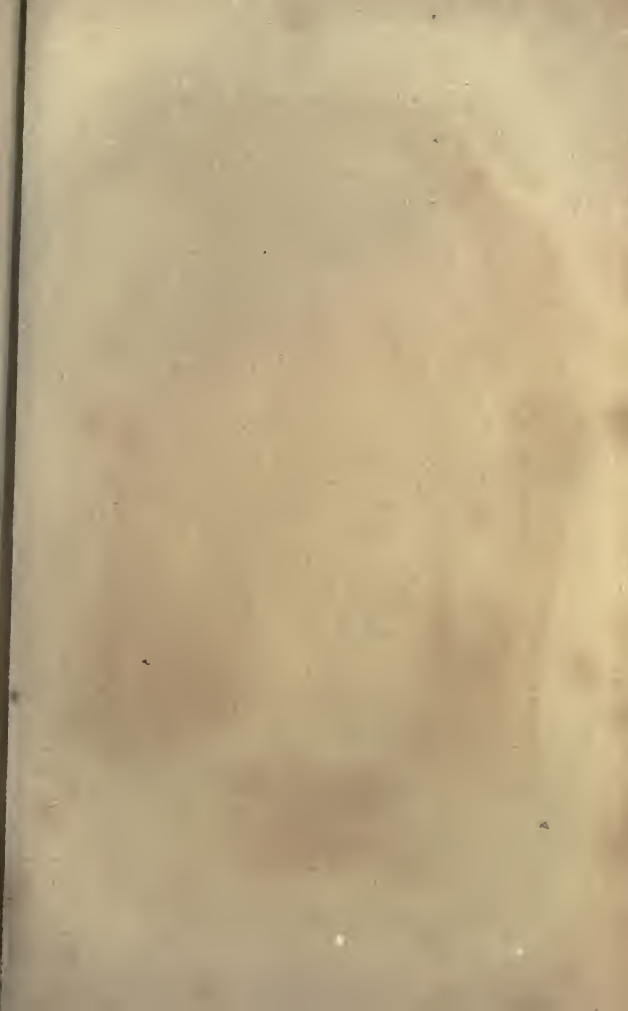
*WHAT* odd fantastic things we women do?  
*Who* won'd not listen when young lovers woo?  
*But* die a maid, yet have the choice of two!  
*Ladies* are often cruel to their cost:  
*To* give you pain themselves they punish most.  
*Vows* of virginity should well be weigh'd;  
*Too* oft they're cancell'd, though in convents made.  
*Wou'd* you revenge such rash resolves—you may  
*Be* spiteful—and believe the thing we say,  
*We* hate you when you're easily said nay.  
*How* needless, if you knew us, were your fears?  
*Let* love have eyes, and beauty will have ears. ✱  
*Our* hearts are form'd as you yourselves would chuse,  
*Too* proud to ask, too humble to refuse:  
*We* give to merit, and to wealth we sell:  
*He* sighs with most success that settles well.  
*The* woes of wedlock with the joys we mix:  
*'Tis* best repenting in a coach and six.  
*Blame* not our conduct, since we but pursue  
*Those* lively lessons we have learnt from you.  
*Your* breasts no more the fire of beauty warms,  
*But* wicked wealth usurps the pow'r of charms.  
*What* pains to get the gaudy things you hate,  
*To* swell in shew, and be a wretch in state.  
*At* plays you ogle, at the ring you bow:  
*E'en* churches are no sanctuaries now:  
*There* golden idols all your vows receive,  
*She* is no goddess that has nought to give.

*Oh, may once more the happy age appear,  
When words were artless, and the thoughts sincere :  
When gold and grandeur were unenvy'd things,  
And courts less coveted than groves and springs :  
Love then shall only mourn when truth complains,  
And constancy feel transport in its chains :  
Sighs with success their own soft anguish tell,  
And eyes shall utter what the lips conceal :  
Virtue again to its bright station climb,  
And beauty fear no enemy but time ;  
The fair shall listen to desert alone,  
And every Lucia find a Cato's son.*

THE END.



Printed by R. M'Donald,  
13, Green Aisle Court.





*By Mrs. J. T. Chapman, author of*

*LEARNED AS  
MISS GAYNE  
This trip was the first  
present of my love.  
Sent to*

*Presented to  
Miss Gayne  
from her mother*

TRAGEDY  
OF  
ISABELLA;  
OR,  
THE FATAL MARRIAGE.

Altered from  
SOUTHERN.

ADAPTED FOR THEATRICAL REPRESENTATION,  
*As performed at the Theatres-Royal,*  
COVENT-GARDEN AND DRURY-LANE.

Regulated from the Prompt Books,

BY PERMISSION OF THE MANAGERS.

WITH THE LIFE OF THE AUTHOR;

And a Critique,

By R. CUMBERLAND, Esq.

The Lines distinguished by inverted Commas are omitted  
in the Representation.

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Cooke's Edition.

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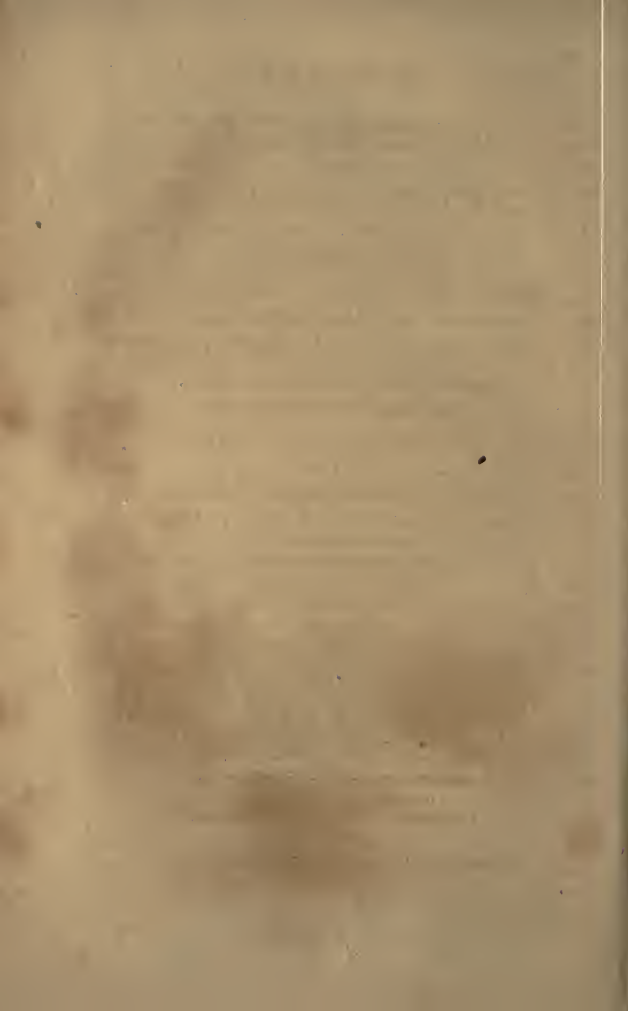
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SUPERBLY EMBELLISHED.

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sold by all the Booksellers in the  
United Kingdom.





## ADVERTISEMENT.

THOUGH the mixed drama of the last age, called Tragi-Comedy, has been generally condemned by the critics, and not without reason; yet it has been found to succeed on the stage: both the comic and tragic scenes have been applauded by the audience, without any particular exceptions: nor has it been observed, that the effect of either was less forcible, than it would have been, if they had not succeeded each other in the entertainment of the same night. The tragic part of this play has been always esteemed extremely natural and interesting; and it would probably, like some others, have produced its full effect, notwithstanding the intervention of the comic scenes that are intermixed with it: the editor, therefore, would not have thought of removing them, if they had not been exceptionable in themselves, not only as indelicate, but as immoral; for this reason he has suffered so much of the characters of the Porter and the Nurse to remain, as is not liable to this objection. He is, however to account, not only for what he has taken away, but for what he has added. It will easily be comprehended, that the leaving out something made it absolutely necessary that something should be supplied; and the public will be the more easily reconciled to this necessity, when they are acquainted that the additions are very inconsiderable, and that the editor has done his utmost to render them of a piece with the rest. Several lines of the original, particularly in the part of Isabella, are printed, though they are omitted in the representation. Many things please in the reading, which may have little or no effect upon the stage. When the passions are violent, and the speeches long, the performers must either spare their powers, or shorten their speeches. Mrs. Siddons chose the latter; by which she has been able to exert that force and expression which has been so strongly felt, and so sincerely applauded.

## LIFE OF THOMAS SOUTHERN.

THIS eminent poet was born in Dublin, in the year 1660, and received his education at the university there. In the eighteenth year of his age he quitted Ireland, and, as his intention was to pursue a lucrative profession, he entered himself in the Middle Temple; but the natural vivacity of his mind overcoming all considerations of advantage, he quitted that state of life, and entered into the more agreeable service of the Muses. The first dramatic performance of Mr. Southern was his *Persian Prince, or Loyal Brother*, acted in the year 1682. This play was introduced at a time when the Tory interest was triumphant in England; and the character of the *Loyal Brother* was intended to compliment James, Duke of York, who afterwards rewarded the poet. His next play was a comedy, called *The Disappointment, or the Mother in Fashion*, performed in the year 1684.

After the accession of James II. to the throne, when the Duke of Monmouth made an unfortunate attempt upon his uncle's crown, Mr. Southern went into the army, in the regiment first raised by the Lord Ferrers, afterwards commanded by the Duke of Berwick; and he had three commissions, viz. ensign, lieutenant, and captain, under K. James in that regiment. During the reign of this prince, in the year before the Revolution, he wrote a tragedy, called *The Spartan Dame*. This play was inimitably acted in 1719. Mr. Booth, Mr. Wilks, Mr. Cibber, Mr. Mills, sen. Mrs. Oldfield, and Mrs. Porter, all performed in it, in their height of reputation, and the full vigour of their powers. Mr. Southern acknowledged that he received from the booksellers, as a price for this play, 150*l.* which at that time was very extraordinary. He was the first who raised the advantage of play-writing to a second and third night. Southern was industrious to draw all imaginable profits from his poetical labours. Dryden once took occasion to ask him, how much he got by one of his plays; to which he an-

swered, that he was really ashamed to inform him. But Mr. Dryden being a little importunate to know, he plainly told him, that by his last play he cleared seven hundred pounds; which appeared astonishing to Dryden, as he had never been able to acquire more than one hundred by his most successful pieces. The secret is, Southern was not beneath the drudgery of solicitation, and often sold his tickets at a very high price, by making applications to persons of distinction; which, perhaps, Dryden thought was much beneath the dignity of a poet. Our author continued, from time to time, to entertain the public with his dramatic pieces, the greatest part of which met with the success they deserved.

Of our author's comedies, none are in possession of the stage, nor perhaps deserve to be so; for in that province he is less excellent than in tragedy. The most finished, and the most pathetic of his plays, in the opinion of the critics, is his *Oroonoko*. His *Isabella, or Fatal Marriage*, met with deserved success; the affecting incidents, and interesting tale in the tragic part sufficiently compensate for the low, trifling, comic intrusions. Mr. Southern died May 26, 1746, in the eighty-sixth year of his age; the latter part of which he spent in a peaceful serenity, having, by his commission as a soldier, and the profits of his dramatic works, acquired a handsome fortune; and being an exact œconomist, he improved what fortune he gained to the best advantage: he enjoyed the longest life of all our poets, and died the richest of them, a very few excepted.

His dramatic pieces are,

1. *The Loyal Brother*. A Tragedy. 4to. 1682.
2. *The Disappointment*. A Comedy. 4to. 1684.
3. *Sir Anthony Love, or the Rambling Lady*. A Comedy. 4to. 1691.
4. *The Wives' Excuse, or Cuckolds make themselves*. A Comedy. 4to. 1692.
5. *The Maid's last Prayer, or Any Thing rather than fail*. A Comedy. 4to. 1693.

6. *Isabella, or the Fatal Marriage*. A Tragedy. 4to. 1694.
7. *Oroonoko*. A Tragedy. 4to. 1696.
8. *The Fate of Capua*. A Tragedy. 4to. 1700.
9. *The Spartan Dame*. A Tragedy. 8vo. 1719.
10. *Money's the Mistress*. A Comedy. 8vo. 1726.

Gildon, in his Continuation of Langbaine, (says Mr. Oldys in his MS. additions to that book) informs us, that our author was the son of George Southern, of Stratford-upon-Avon, in Warwickshire; and that he became a servitor of Pembroke Hall, Oxford, in the year 1680, aged seventeen, or more, according to Wood. Mr. Oldys adds, that he remembered Mr. Southern, "a grave and venerable old gentleman. He lived near Covent-Garden, and used often to frequent the evening prayers there, always neat and decently dressed, commonly in black, with his silver sword and silver locks; but latterly, it seems, he resided at Westminster." The late excellent poet, Mr. Gray, in a letter to Mr. Walpole, dated from Burnham, in Buckinghamshire, September 1737, has also the following observation concerning our author. "We have old Mr. Southern at a gentleman's house a little way off, who often comes to see us; he is now seventy-seven years old, and has almost wholly lost his memory; but is as agreeable an old man as can be, at least I persuade myself so when I look at him, and think of *Isabella* and *Oroonoko*." Mr. Mason adds, in a note on this passage, (4to. edit. p. 25.) that "Mr. Gray always thought highly of his pathetic powers, at the same time that he blamed his ill taste for mixing them so injudiciously with farce, in order to produce that monstrous species of composition called Tragi-comedy." Mr. Southern, however, in the latter part of his life, was sensible of the impropriety of blending tragedy and comedy, and used to declare to Lord Corke his regret at complying with the licentious taste of the times.

THE EDITOR.

CRITIQUE  
ON  
*ISABELLA*,  
OR  
THE FATAL MARRIAGE.

WHEN it struck the poet's fancy to contrive this play, he could not easily have devised a more affecting incident than that of a fond and faithful husband returning after seven years of absence to a beloved wife, and finding her in the arms of another husband. When he had decided upon this circumstance, as the great hinge on which the pathos of his fable was to turn, he did perfectly right to lay his scene in private life, as bringing it nearer to the hearts of men. It would naturally be his next object to save the character of the wife, by giving her sufficient grounds for justifying her as to the measure of a second marriage; and this of course implies a conviction, or strong persuasion on her part as to the death of her first husband. To make this deception perfectly in nature would be his next care; accordingly we find, that Biron is reported to have died of his wounds in battle, and to have been kept in slavery for the space of seven years, during which, though he found opportunities for writing, and actually did send letters to his wife, yet those letters were intercepted and never reached her.

As this particular must have cost the projector of the plot some trouble to reconcile it to probability,

Southern struck on the expedient of devising a character, whose interest it should be to keep Isabella in the persuasion of Biron's death, and who had also the means of stopping all those letters, which would else have undeceived her. This odious character he bestows upon Carlos; and in order to give him a motive for the villainous part which he assigns to him, he makes him the younger brother of Biron, and next in succession to the fortune of the wealthy Count Baldwin, father to them both.

Still the expedient of this intervening character, which is meant not only to account for Isabella's ignorance of her husband's existence, but also to be the engine for all the mischief that ensues upon the *fatal marriage* which she consummates with Villeroy, has more demands upon it, than nature and probability can well provide for. He is to risk a deception on his father as well as on his sister-in-law; and as he is known to have received letters from his living brother, this seems a most perilous experiment without a sufficient object for resorting to it. The death of his brother, and the consequent inheritance of his fortune, are the only points that he looks up to; and the fatal marriage, which he is so villainously busy to promote, no otherwise can be tortured to the purpose of his ravishing the inheritance from his elder brother, than by the savage hope which he expresses, that the discovery would be such a blow to Biron as would cause his death. This is so far-fetched a hope, and a motive so disproportioned to the barefaced villainy of a measure, in which he must be detected if ever Biron lived to return, that the poet (aware, no



doubt, of an absurdity so striking) describes Carlos as incensed against Villeroy, because he had made suit to his sister, and been rejected. This double motive for an act so treacherous is evidently thrown in as a buttress to a feeble part in the structure of the plot. Still it must be confessed, that this round-about contrivance of compassing the death of Biron, by promoting the marriage of Isabella with Villeroy, is a very unnatural circuit for a man to take, who was so ready to adopt the straight-forward course of assassination, and come to his object at once by the murder of his brother.

The poet's next care would naturally be to furnish his heroine with such powerful and imperious reasons for marrying Villeroy, as should save her from any appearance of levity : this he has most effectually accomplished, and upon the distressful circumstances in which he has exhibited Isabella, has founded the very best and most affecting scenes in his drama. In doing this, however, he has drawn such a dire picture of Baldwin's inhumanity, and plunged his hapless heroine into such an abyss of woe, as seems to have suggested to him the idea of throwing into her history something that might serve in part as a salvo for the brutal cruelty with which she is treated; otherwise I can see no reason why she is saddled with the charge of having violated her conventual vows, which enables Baldwin thus to retort upon her—

“ How dare you mention Heav'n ? Call to mind

“ Your perjur'd vows, your plighted, broken faith

“ To Heav'n and all things holy : were you not

“ Devoted, wedded to a life recluse,

“ The sacred habit on, profess'd and sworn,

“ A votary for ever ?”

It seems as if the poet had felt a repugnance against laying such an accumulated load of misfortune, despair, phrenzy, and finally self-murder, upon his wretched heroine, unless he had made her in some measure responsible for her own sufferings.

But when the poet, whilst he planned the business of his drama, conceived such instruments for carrying on his plot as Sampson and the Nurse, weaving the brutish insults of the one, and the indecorous gabble of the other, into the pathos of his tragedy, he did exactly what in the present day would either have stopt his play from ever appearing on the stage, or have damned it on its very first appearance. In fact, Southern has mingled so much dross with his gold, that it has been necessary to refine it over and over again, before it could be made a decent vehicle to exhibit the fine acting which, from the time of Mrs. Cibber to the present, has been the sole support of this modo-dramatic tragi-comedy.

When he comes to his catastrophe, he appears like a bedlamite broken loose from his chains, or one of those demoniacs who are described under the influence of a siroque, as rushing out of doors to stab every object that they cross upon. He commits murders without meaning, and instead of making madness horrible, he makes horror mad; prompts Isabella to stab Biron, suffers Villeroy to draw his sword upon him because he gives a farewell kiss to his own wife, permits his brother Carlos to assassinate him, makes the villain boast his crimes and laugh at con-

sequences, lets his heroine, in whose sorrows we had sympathized, take leave of life, and preface the dreadful act of self-murder by the most impious disavowal of Heaven's justice, uttering these horrid blasphemies whilst she plunges the dagger into her heart—

“ —I did not hope to find

“ Justice on earth ; 'tis not in Heav'n neither.

“ Biron has watch'd his opportunity——

“ Softly ; he steals it from the *sleeping gods*,

“ And sends it thus—— [Stabs herself.”

What could be in Southern's mind when he conceived this passage, puzzles me to conjecture. It would have been outrageous blasphemy even in a dying Pagan, and insanity itself cannot apologize for it.

That there are passages of exquisite and pathetic simplicity in this motley drama, no reader can fail to acknowledge ; but every critic will be unanimous in condemning it as a most faulty and imperfect composition.

C.



## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

### *Men.*

COUNT BALDWIN, *Father to Biron and Carlos.*

BIRON, *married to Isabella, supposed dead.*

CARLOS, *his younger Brother.*

VILLEROY, *in Love with Isabella, marries her.*

SAMPSON, *Porter to Count Baldwin.*

*A Child of Isabella's by Biron.*

BELLFORD, *a Friend of Biron's.*

PEDRO, *a Friend to Carlos.*

### *Women.*

ISABELLA, *married to Biron and Villeroy.*

*Nurse to Biron.*

*Officers, Servants, Men and Women.*

*Scene, BRUSSELS.*



ISABELLA;  
OR,  
THE FATAL MARRIAGE.

ACT I. SCENE I.

*Before Count BALDWIN's House. Enter VILLEROY  
and CARLOS.*

*Carlos.* THIS constancy of yours will establish an immortal reputation among the women.

*Vil.* If it would establish me with Isabella——

*Car.* Follow her, follow her: Troy town was won at last.

*Vil.* I have follow'd her these seven years, and now but live in hopes.

*Car.* But live in hopes! Why, hope is the ready road, the lover's baiting-place; and, for aught you know, but one stage short of the possession of your mistress.

*Vil.* But my hopes, I fear, are more of my own making than her's; and proceed rather from my wishes, than any encouragement she has given me.

*Car.* That I can't tell: the sex is very various; there are no certain measures to be prescrib'd or follow'd, in making our approaches to the women. All that we have to do, I think, is to attempt 'em in the weakest part. Press them but hard, and they will all fall under the necessity of a surrender at last. That favour comes at once; and sometimes when we least expect it.

*Vil.* I shall be glad to find it so.

*Car.* You will find it so. Every place is to be taken, that is not to be reliev'd: she must comply.

*Vil.* I'm going to visit her.

*Car.* What interest a brother-in-law can have with her, depend upon.

*Vil.* I know your interest, and I thank you.

*Car.* You are prevented: see, the mourner comes; She weeps, as seven years were seven hours;

So fresh, unfading, is the memory  
Of my poor brother's, Biron's death:

I leave you to your opportunity. [*Exit Vil.*

Tho' I have taken care to root her from our house,  
I would transplant her into Villeroy's——

There is an evil fate that waits upon her,

To which I wish him wedded——only him:

His upstart family, with haughty brow,  
(Tho' Villeroy and myself are seeming friends)

Looks down upon our house; his sister too,

Whose hand I ask'd, and was with scorn refus'd,

Lives in my breast, and fires me to revenge.——

'They bend this way——

Perhaps, at last, she seeks my father's doors;

They shall be shut, and be prepar'd to give

The beggar and her brat a cold reception.

That boy's an adder in my path—they come.

I'll stand apart, and watch their motions. [*Retires.*

*Enter VILLEROY, with ISABELLA and her little Son.*

*Isa.* Why do you follow me? you know I am

A bankrupt every way; too far engag'd

Ever to make return: I own you have been

More than a brother to me, my friend;

And at a time when friends are found no more,

A friend to my misfortunes.

*Vil.* I must be always your friend.

*Isa.* I have known, and found you

Truly my friend; and would I could be yours:

But the unfortunate cannot be friends:

“ Fate watches the first motion of the soul,

“ To disappoint our wishes; if we pray



“ For blessings, they prove curses in the end,  
 “ To ruin all about us.” Pray be gone,  
 Take warning, and be happy.

*Vil.* Happiness!

There's none for me without you : “ Riches, name,  
 “ Health, fame, distinction, place, and quality,  
 “ Are the incumbrances of groaning life,  
 “ To make it but more tedious without you.”  
 What serve the goods of fortune for? To raise  
 My hopes, that you at last will share them with me.  
 “ Long life itself, the universal prayer,  
 “ And Heav'n's reward of well-deservers here,  
 “ Would prove a plague to me ; to see you always,  
 “ And never see you mine ! still to desire,  
 “ And never to enjoy !”

*Isa.* I must not hear you.

*Vil.* Thus, at this awful distance, I have serv'd  
 A seven years bondage—Do I call it bondage,  
 When I can never wish to be redeem'd?  
 No, let me rather linger out a life  
 Of expectation, that you may be mine,  
 Than be restor'd to the indifference  
 Of seeing you, without this pleasing pain :  
 I've lost myself, and never would be found,  
 But in these arms.

*Isa.* Oh, I have heard all this !

——But must no more——the charmer is no more :  
 My buried husband rises in the face  
 Of my dear boy, and chides me for my stay :  
 Canst thou forgive me, child?

*Child.* Why, have you done a fault ? You cry as if  
 you had. Indeed now, I've done nothing to offend  
 you : but if you kiss me, and look so very sad upon  
 me, I shall cry too.

*Isa.* My little angel, no, you must not cry ;  
 Sorrow will overtake thy steps too soon :  
 I should not hasten it.

*Vil.* What can I say !

The arguments that make against my hopes  
 Prevail upon my heart, and fix me more ;

" Those pious tears you hourly throw away  
 " Upon the grave have all their quick'ning charms,  
 " And more engage my love, to make you mine:"  
 When yet a virgin, free, and undispos'd,  
 I lov'd, but saw you only with my eyes;  
 I could not reach the beauties of your soul:  
 I have since liv'd in contemplation  
 And long experience of your growing goodness:  
 What then was passion, is my judgment now,  
 Thro' all the several changes of your life,  
 Confirm'd and settled in adoring you.

*Isa.* Nay, then I must be gone. If you're my friend,  
 If you regard my little interest,  
 No more of this; you see, I grant you all  
 That friendship will allow: be still my friend;  
 That's all I can receive, or have to give.  
 I'm going to my father; he needs not an excuse  
 To use me ill: pray leave me to the trial.

*Vil.* I'm only born to be what you would have me,  
 The creature of your power, and must obey;  
 In every thing obey you. I am going:  
 But all good fortune go along with you.

*Isa.* I shall need all your wishes—— [Exit.  
[Knocks.

Lock'd and fast!  
 Where is the charity that us'd to stand  
 In our forefathers' hospitable days  
 At great men's doors, ready for our wants,  
 Like the good angel of the family,  
 With open arms taking the needy in,  
 To feed and clothe, to comfort and relieve 'em?  
 Now even their gates are shut against their poor.

*[She knocks again.*

*Enter SAMPSON to her.*

*Samp.* Well, what's to do now, I trow? You knock  
 as loud as if you were invited; and that's more than  
 I heard of; but I can tell you, you may look twice  
 about you for a welcome in a great man's family be-  
 fore you find it, unless you bring it along with you.

*Isa.* I hope I bring my welcome along with me:

Is your lord at home?

Count Baldwin lives here still?

*Sam.* Ay, ay, Count Baldwin does live here; and I am his porter: but what's that to the purpose, good woman, of my lord's being at home!

*Isa.* Why, don't you know me, friend?

*Samp.* Not I, not I, mistress; I may have seen you before, or so; but men of employment must forget their acquaintance; especially such as we are never to be the better for.

[*Going to shut the door, Nurse enters having overheard him.*]

*Nurse.* Handsomer words would become you, and mend your manners, Sampson: do you know who you prate to?

*Isa.* I'm glad you know me, nurse.

*Nurse.* Marry, Heav'n forbid, madam, that I should ever forget you, or my little jewel: pray go in—[*Isabella goes in with her Child.*] Now my blessing go along with you wherever you go, or whatever you are about. Fie, Sampson, how couldst thou be such a Saracen? A Turk would have been a better Christian, than to have done so barbarously by so good a lady.

*Samp.* Why look you, nurse, I know you of old: by your good-will you would have a finger in every body's pie: but mark the end on't; if I am called to account about it, I know what I have to say.

*Nurse.* Marry come up here; say your pleasure, and spare not. Refuse his eldest son's widow, and poor child, the comfort of seeing him? She does not trouble him so often.

*Samp.* Not that I am against it, nurse: but we are but servants, you know: we must have no likings, but our lord's; and must do as we are ordered.

“ *Nurse.* Nay, that's true, Sampson.

“ *Samp.* Besides, what I did was all for the best:  
“ I have no ill-will to the young lady, as a body may  
“ say, upon my own account; only that I hear she is  
“ poor; and indeed I naturally hate your decay'd  
“ gentry: they expect as much waiting upon as when

“ they had money in their pockets, and were able to consider us for the trouble.

“ *Nurse.* Why, that is a grievance indeed in great families, where the gifts, at good times, are better than the wages. It would do well to be reformed.”

*Samp.* But what is the business, nurse? You have been in the family before I came into the world. what’s the reason, pray, that this daughter-in-law, who has so good a report in every body’s mouth, is so little set by, by my lord?

*Nurse.* Why, I tell you, Sampson, more or less; I’ll tell the truth, that’s my way, you know, without adding or diminishing.

*Samp.* Ay, marry, nurse.

*Nurse.* My lord’s eldest son, Biron by name, the son of his bosom, and the son that he would have lov’d best, if he had as many as king Pyramus of Troy.

“ *Samp.* How! King Pyramus of Troy? Why, how many had he?”

“ *Nurse.* Why, the ballad sings he had fifty sons; but no matter for that.” This Biron, as I was saying, was a lovely sweet gentleman, and, indeed, nobody could blame his father for loving him: he was a son for the king of Spain; God bless him, for I was his nurse. But now I come to the point, Sampson; this Biron, without asking the advice of his friends, hand over head, as young men will have their vagaries, not having the fear of his father before his eyes, as I may say, wilfully marries this Isabella.

*Samp.* How, wilfully! he should have had her consent, methinks.

*Nurse.* No, wilfully marries her; and, which was worse, after she had settled all her fortune upon a nunnery, which she broke out of to run away with him. They say they had the church’s forgiveness, but I had rather it had been his father’s.

*Samp.* Why, in good truth, “these nunneries, I see no good they do. I think the young lady was in the right to run away from a nunnery:” and I

think our young master was not in the wrong but in marrying without a portion.

*Nurse.* That was the quarrel, I believe, Sampson: upon this, my old lord would never see him; disinherited him; took his younger brother, Carlos, into favour, whom he never car'd for before; and at last forc'd Biron to go to the siege of Candy, where he was killed.

*Samp.* Alack-a day, poor gentleman.

*Nurse.* For which my old lord hates her, as if she had been the cause of his going thither.

*Samp.* Alas, alas, poor lady! she has suffered for it: she has liv'd a great while a widow.

*Nurse.* A great while indeed, for a young woman, Sampson.

*Samp.* Gad so! here they come; I won't venture to be seen.

*Enter Count BALDWIN, followed by ISABELLA and her Child.*

*C. Bald.* Whoever of your friends directed you,  
Misguided and abus'd you—There's your way;  
I can afford to shew you out again;  
What could you expect from me?

*Isa.* Oh, I have nothing to expect on earth!  
But misery is very apt to talk:  
I thought I might be heard.

*C. Bald.* What can you say?  
Is there in eloquence, can there be in words,  
A recompensing pow'r, a remedy,  
A reparation of the injuries,  
The great calamities, that you have brought  
On me, and mine? You have destroy'd those hopes  
I fondly rais'd, through my declining life,  
To rest my age upon; and most undone me.

*Isa.* I have undone myself too.

*C. Bald.* Speak it again;  
Stay still you are undone, and I will hear you,  
With pleasure hear you.

*Isa.* Would my ruin please you?

*C. Bald.* Beyond all other pleasures.

*Isa.* Then you are pleas'd—for I am most undone.

*C. Bald.* I pray'd but for revenge, and Heav'n has heard,

And sent it to my wishes: these grey hairs  
Would have gone down in sorrow to the grave,  
Which you have dug for me, without the thought,  
The thought of leaving you more wretched here.

*Isa.* Indeed I am most wretched—"When I lost  
" My husband——

" *C. Bald.* Would he had never been;

" Or never had been yours.

" *Isa.* I then believ'd

" The measure of my sorrow then was full:

" But every moment of my growing days

" Makes room for woes, and adds them to the sum."

I lost with Biron all the joys of life:

But now its last supporting means are gone,

All the kind helps that Heav'n in pity rais'd,

In charitable pity to our wants,

At last have left us: now bereft of all,

But this last trial of a cruel father,

To save us both from sinking. Oh, my child!

Kneel with me, knock at nature in his heart:

Let the resemblance of a once-lov'd son

Speak in this little one, who never wrong'd you,

And plead the fatherless and widow's cause.

Oh, if you ever hope to be forgiven,

As you will need to be forgiven too,

Forget our faults, that Heaven may pardon yours!

*C. Bald.* How dare you mention Heav'n! Call to  
mind

Your perjur'd vows; your plighted, broken faith

To Heav'n and all things holy: were you not

Devoted, wedded to a life recluse,

The sacred habit on, profess'd and sworn,

A votary for ever? Can you think

The sacrilegious wretch, that robs the shrine,

Is thunder proof?

*Isa.* There, there began my woes.

" Let women all take warning at my fate;

" Never resolve, or think they can be safe,



" Within the reach and tongue of tempting men."

Oh! had I never seen my Biron's face,  
Had he not tempted me, I had not fall'n,  
But still continued innocent and free  
Of a bad world, which only he had pow'r  
To reconcile, and make me try again.

*C. Bald.* Your own inconstancy, " your graceless  
" thoughts,

" Debauch'd and" reconcil'd you to the world:  
He had no hand to bring you back again,  
But what you gave him. Circe, you prevail'd  
Upon his honest mind, transforming him  
From virtue, and himself, into what shapes  
You had occasion for; and what he did  
Was first inspir'd by you. " A cloister was  
" Too narrow for the work you had in hand:  
" Your business was more general; the whole world  
" To be the scene: therefore you spread your charms  
" To catch his soul, to be the instrument,  
" The wicked instrument, of your cursed flight.  
" Not that you valued him; for any one,  
" Who could have serv'd the turn, had been as wel-  
" come."

*Isa.* Oh! I have sins to Heav'n, but none to him.

*C. Bald.* Had my wretched son  
Marry'd a beggar's bastard; taken her  
Out of her rags, and made her of my blood,  
The mischief might have ceas'd, and ended there.  
But bringing you into a family,  
Entails a curse upon the name and house  
That takes you in: the only part of me  
That did receive you, perish'd for his crime.  
'Tis a defiance to offended Heav'n  
Barely to pity you: your sins pursue you:  
" The heaviest judgments that can fall upon you,  
" Are your just lot, and but prepare your doom:  
" Expect 'em, and despair——Sirrah, rogue,  
" How durst thou disobey me!" [*To the Porter.*]  
*Isa.* Not for myself——for I am past the hopes  
Of being heard——but for this innocent——

And then I never will disturb you more.

*C. Bald.* I almost pity the unhappy child:  
But being yours——

*Isa.* Look on him as your son's;  
And let his part in him answer for mine.  
Oh, save, defend him, save him from the wrongs  
That fall upon the poor!

*C. Bald.* It touches me——  
And I will save him—But to keep him safe;  
Never come near him more.

*Isa.* What! take him from me!  
No, we must never part: 'tis the last hold  
Of comfort I have left; and when he fails,  
All goes along with him: Oh! “could you be  
“The tyrant to divorce life from my life?”  
I live but in my child.  
No, let me pray in vain, and beg my bread  
From door to door, to feed his daily wants,  
Rather than always lose him.

*C. Bald.* Then have your child, and feed him with  
your prayer.  
You rascal, slave, what do I keep you for?  
How came this woman in?

*Samp.* Why indeed, my lord, I did as good as tell  
her, before, my thoughts upon the matter——

*C. Bald.* Did you so, sir? Now then tell her mine;  
Tell her, I sent you to her. [*Thrusts him towards her.*  
There's one more to provide for.

*Samp.* Good, my lord, what I did was in perfect  
obedience to the old nurse there. I told her what it  
would come to.

*C. Bald.* What! this was a plot upon me. And you  
too, beldam, were you in the conspiracy? Begone,  
go all together; “I have provided you an equipage,  
“now set up when you please. She's old enough to  
“do you service; I have none for her. The wide  
“world lies before you: begone:” take any road but  
this to beg or starve in——“I shall be glad to hear of  
“you:” but never, never see me more——

[*He drives 'em off before him.*

*Isa.* 'Then Heav'n have mercy on me!

[*Exit with her Child, followed by Sampson and Nurse.*

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ACT II. SCENE I.

*Continues. Enter VILLEROY and CARLOS, meeting.*

*Villeroy.* My friend, I fear to ask—but Isabella—  
The lovely widow's tears, her orphan's cries,  
Thy father must feel for them—No, I read,  
I read their cold reception in thine eyes—  
Thou pitiest them—tho' Baldwin—but I spare him  
For Carlos' sake; thou art no son of his.  
'There needs not this to endear thee more to me.

[*Embrace.*

*Car.* My Villeroy, the fatherless, the widow,  
Are terms not understood within these gates—  
You must forgive him, sir; he thinks this woman  
Is Biron's fate, that hurried him to death—  
I must not think on't, lest my friendship stagger.  
My friend's, my sister's mutual advantage  
Have reconcil'd my bosom to its task.

*Vil.* Advantage! think not I intend to raise  
An interest from Isabella's wrongs.  
Your father may have interested ends  
In her undoing; but my heart has none:  
Her happiness must be my interest,  
And that I would restore.

*Car.* Why so I mean.  
These hardships that my father lays upon her,  
I'm sorry for; and wish I could prevent;  
But he will have his way.  
Since there's no hope from her prosperity, her change  
of fortune may alter the condition of her thoughts,  
and make for you.

*Vil.* She is above her fortune.

*Car.* Try her again. Women commonly love according to the circumstances they are in.

*Vil.* Common women may.

“*Car.* Since you are not accessory to the injustice,

“ you may be persuaded to take the advantage of  
“ other people’s crimes.”

“ *Vil.* I must despise all those advantages,  
“ That indirectly can advance my love.”  
No, though I live but in the hopes of her,  
And languish for th<sup>e</sup> enjoyment of those hopes;  
I’d rather pine in a consuming want  
Of what I wish, than have the blessing mine,  
From any reason but consenting love.

Oh! let me never have it to remember,  
I could betray her coldly to comply:  
When a clear gen’rous choice bestows her on me,  
I know to value the unequall’d gift:  
I would not have it, but to value it.

*Car.* Take your own way: remember what I of-  
fer’d came from a friend.

*Vil.* I understand it so. I’ll serve her for herself,  
without the thought of a reward. [*Exit.*

*Car.* Agree that point between you. If you marry  
her any way, you do my business.  
I know him—What his gen’rous soul intends  
Ripens my plots—I’ll first to Isabella.—  
I must keep up appearances with her too. [*Exit.*

## SCENE II.

*ISABELLA’s House. Enter ISABELLA and Nurse:  
ISABELLA’s little Son at play upon the Floor.*

*Isa.* Sooner or later, all things pass away,  
And are no more. The beggar and the king,  
With equal steps, tread forward to their end:  
The reconciling grave swallows distinction first, that  
made us foes,

“ Though they appear of different natures now,  
“ They meet at last;”

Then all alike lie down in peace together.  
When will that hour of peace arrive for me?  
In Heav’n I shall find it—not in Heav’n,  
If my old tyrant father can dispose  
Of things above—but, there, his interest  
May be as poor as mine, and want a friend  
As much as I do here.

[*Weeping.*

*Nurse.* Good madam, be comforted.

*Isa.* Do I deserve to be this outcast wretch;  
Abandon'd thus, and lost? But 'tis my lot,  
The will of Heav'n, and I must not complain:  
I will not for myself: let me bear all  
The violence of your wrath; but spare my child:  
Let not my sins be visited on him:  
They are; they must; a general ruin falls  
On every thing about me: thou art lost,  
Poor nurse, by being near me.

*Nurse.* I can work, or beg, to do you service.

*Isa.* Could I forget  
What I have been, I might the better bear  
What I am destin'd to: I'm not the first  
That have been wretched: but to think how much  
I have been happier!—Wild hurrying thoughts  
Start every way from my distracted soul,  
To find out hope, and only meet despair.  
What answer have I?

*Enter SAMPSON.*

*Samp.* Why truly, very little to the purpose: like  
a Jew as he is, he says you have had more already than  
the jewels are worth: he wishes you would rather  
think of redeeming 'em, than expect any more money  
upon 'em.

[*Exit Sampson.*]

*Isa.* 'Tis very well——

So:—Poverty at home, and debts abroad!  
My present fortune bad; my hopes yet worse!  
What will become of me?  
This ring is all I have left of value now:  
'Twas given me by my husband: his first gift  
Upon our marriage: I've always kept it,  
With my best care, the treasure next my life:  
And now but part with it to support life,  
Which only can be dearer. Take it, Nurse,  
'Twill stop the cries of hunger for a time;  
“ Provide us bread, and bring a short reprieve,  
“ To put off the bad day of beggary,  
“ That will come on too soon.” Take care of it:

Manage it as the last remaining friend  
That would relieve us. [*Exit Nurse.*] Heav'n can  
only tell

Where we shall find another—My dear boy!  
The labour of his birth was lighter to me  
Than of my fondness now; my fears for him  
Are more, than in that hour of hovering death  
They could be for myself—He minds me not,  
His little sports have taken up his thoughts:  
Oh, may they never feel the pangs of mine.  
Thinking will make me mad: why must I think,  
When no thought brings me comfort?

*Nurse returns.*

*Nurse.* Oh, madam! you are utterly ruin'd and undone; your creditors of all kinds are come in upon you: they have mustered up a regiment of rogues, that are come to plunder your house, and seize upon all you have in the world; they are below. What will you do, madam?

*Isa.* Do! nothing; no, for I am born to suffer.

*Enter CARLOS to her.*

*Car.* Oh, sister! can I call you by that name,  
And be the son of this inhuman man,  
Inveterate to your ruin? Do not think  
I am a-kin to his barbarity:  
I must abhor my father's usage of you;  
And from my bleeding honest heart must pity.  
Pity your lost condition. Can you think  
Of any way that I may serve you in?  
But what enrages most my sense of grief,  
My sorrow for your wrongs, is, that my father,  
Fore-knowing well the storm that was to fall,  
Has order'd me not to appear for you.

*Isa.* I thank your pity; my poor husband fell  
For disobeying him, do not you stay  
To venture his displeasure too for me.

*Car.* You must resolve on something— [*Exit*

*Isa.* Let my fate  
Determine for me; I shall be prepar'd,



The worst that can befall me, is to die : [A noise.  
“ When once it comes to that, it matters not  
“ Which way ’tis brought about; whether I starve,  
“ Or hang, or drown, the end is still the same;  
“ Plagues, poison, famine, are but several names  
“ Of the same thing, and all conclude in death.  
“ But sudden death! Oh, for a sudden death,  
“ To cheat my persecutors of their hopes,  
“ Th’ expected pleasure of beholding me.  
“ Long in my pains, ling’ring in misery.  
“ It will not be, that is deny’d me too.”  
Hark, they are coming; let the torrent roar:  
It can but overwhelm me in its fall;  
And life and death are now alike to me.

[*Exeunt, the Nurse leading the Child.*

## SCENE III.

*Opens, and shews CARLOS and VILLEROY with the Officers.*

*Vil.* No farther violence——

The debt in all is but four thousand crowns:  
Were it ten times the sum, I think you know  
My fortune very well can answer it.

You have my word for this: I’ll see you paid.

*Off.* That’s as much as we can desire: so we have  
the money, no matter whence it comes.

*Vil.* To morrow you shall have it.

*Car.* Thus far all’s well——

*Enter ISABELLA, and Nurse with the Child.*

And now my sister comes to crown the work. [*Aside.*

*Isa.* Where are the raving blood-hounds, that pursue  
In a full cry, gaping to swallow me?

I meet your rage, and come to be devour’d:

Say, which way are you to dispose of me?

To dungeons, darkness, death!

*Car.* Have patience.

*Isa.* Patience!

*Off.* You’ll excuse us, we are but in our office:  
Debts must be paid.

*Isa.* My death will pay you all. [*Distractedly.*

*Off.* While there is law to be had, people will have their own.

*Vil.* 'Tis very fit they should; but pray be gone.  
To morrow certainly—— [*Exeunt Officers.*

*Isa.* What of to-morrow?

“ Am I then the sport,

“ The game of fortune, and her laughing fools?

“ The common spectacle, to be expos'd

“ From day to day, and baited for the mirth

“ Of the lewd rabble?” Must I be reserv'd

For fresh afflictions?

*Vil.* For long happiness  
Of life, I hope.

*Isa.* There is no hope for me.

The load grows light, when we resolve to bear :  
I'm ready for my trial

*Car.* Pray be calm,  
And know your friends.

*Isa.* My friends! Have I a friend?

*Car.* A faithful friend; in your extremest need,  
Villeroy came in to save you——

*Isa.* Save me! How?

*Car.* By satisfying all your creditors.

*Isa.* Which way! For what?

*Vil.* Let me be understood,  
And then condemn me: you have given me leave  
To be your friend; and in that only name  
I now appear before you. I could wish  
There had been no occasion of a friend,  
Because I know you hate to be oblig'd;  
And still more loth to be oblig'd by me.

*Isa.* 'Twas that I would avoid——

[*Aside.*

*Vil.* I'm most unhappy that my services  
Can be suspected to design upon you;  
I have no farther ends than to redeem you  
From fortune's wrongs; to shew myself at last,  
What I have long profess'd to be, your friend:  
Allow me that; and to convince you more,  
That I intend only your interest,

Forgive what I have done, and in amends  
(If that can make you any, that can please you)  
I'll tear myself for ever from my hopes,  
Stifle this flaming passion in my soul,  
"That has so long broke out to trouble you,"  
And mention my unlucky love no more.

*Isa.* This generosity will ruin me. [*Aside.*

*Vil.* Nay, if the blessing of my looking on you  
Disturbs your peace, I will do all I can  
To keep away and never see you more.

*Car.* You must not go.

*Vil.* Could Isabella speak  
Those few short words, I should be rooted here,  
And never move but upon her commands.

*Car.* Speak to him, sister; do not throw away  
A fortune that invites you to be happy.  
In your extremity he begs your love;  
And has deserv'd it nobly. Think upon  
Your lost condition, helpless and alone.  
Tho' now, you have a friend, the time must come  
That you will want one; him you may secure  
To be a friend, a father, husband to you.

*Isa.* A husband!

*Car.* You have discharg'd your duty to the dead,  
And to the living; 'tis a wilfulness  
Not to give way to your necessities,  
That force you to this marriage.

*Nur.* What must become of this poor innocence?  
[*To the Child,*

*Car.* He wants a father to protect his youth,  
And rear him up to virtue: you must bear  
The future blame, and answer to the world,  
When you refuse the easy honest means  
Of taking care of him.

"*Nur.* Of him and me,  
"And every one that must depend upon you:  
"Unless you please now to provide for us,  
"We must all perish."

*Car.* Nor would I press you——

*Isa.* Do not think I need

Your reasons to confirm my gratitude;  
I have a soul that's truly sensible  
Of your great worth, and busy to contrive, [To Vil.  
If possible, to make you a return.

*Vil.* Oh! easily possible!

*Isa.* It cannot be your way: my pleasures are  
Bury'd and cold in my dead husband's grave;  
And I should wrong the truth, myself, and you,  
To say that I can ever love again.  
I owe this declaration to myself:  
But as a proof that I owe all to you,  
If after what I have said, you can resolve  
To think me worth your love—Where am I going?  
You cannot think it; 'tis impossible.

*Vil.* Impossible!

*Isa.* You should not ask me now, nor should I  
grant;

I am so much oblig'd, that to consent  
Wou'd want a name to recommend the gift;  
'Twou'd shew me poor, indebted, and compell'd,  
Designing, mercenary; and I know  
You would not wish to think I could be bought.

*Vil.* Be bought! where is the price that can pretend  
To bargain for you? Not in fortune's power.  
The joys of heav'n and love must be bestow'd;  
They are not to be sold, and cannot be deserv'd;

*Isa.* Some other time I'll hear you on this subject.

*Vil.* Nay, then there is no time fit for me.

[Following her.

Since you consent to hear me, hear me now;  
That you may grant: you are above  
The little forms which circumscribe your sex;  
We differ but in time, let that be mine.

*Isa.* You think fit  
To get the better of me, and you shall;  
Since you will have it so—I will be yours.

*Vil.* I take you at your word.

*Isa.* I give you all—  
My hand; and would I had a heart to give:

But if it ever can return again,  
Tis wholly yours.

*Vil.* Oh, ecstasy of joy!  
Leave that to me. If all my services,  
“ If prosperous days, and kind indulging nights;  
If all that man can fondly say or do,  
Can beget love, love shall be born again.  
Oh, Carlos! now my friend, and brother too;  
And, Nurse, I have eternal thanks for thee.  
Send for the priest—— [*Nurse goes out in haste.*  
This night you must be mine.  
Let me command in this, and all my life  
Shall be devoted to you.

*Isa.* On your word,  
Never to press me to put off these weeds,  
Which best become my melancholy thoughts,  
You shall command me.

*Vil.* Witness Heaven and earth  
Against my soul, when I do any thing  
To give you a disquiet.

*Car.* I long to wish you joy.

*Vil.* You'll be a witness of my happiness?

*Car.* For once I'll be my sister's father,  
And give her to you.

*Vil.* Next my Isabella,  
Be near my heart: I am for ever yours. [*Exeunt.*

### ACT III. SCENE I.

*Count Baldwin's House. Enter Count BALDWIN  
and CARLOS.*

*Count Baldwin.* MARRIED to Villeroy, say'st thou?

*Car.* Yes, my lord.

Last night the priest perform'd his holy office,  
And made 'em one.

*C. Bald.* Misfortune join 'em!  
And may her violated vows pull down  
A lasting curse, a constancy of sorrow  
On both their heads——“ I have not yet forgot  
“ Thy slighted passion, the refus'd alliance;

“ But having her, we are reveng’d at full.

“ Heav’n will pursue her still, and Villeroy

“ Share the judgments she calls down.”

*Car.* Soon he’ll hate her;

Tho’ warm and violent in his raptures now;

When full enjoyment palls his sicken’d sense,

And reason with satiety returns,

Her cold constrain’d acceptance of his hand

Will gall his pride, which (tho’ of late o’erpower’d

By stronger passions) will, as they grow weak,

Rise in full force, and pour its vengeance on her.

*C. Bald.* Now, Carlos, take example to thy aid;

Let Biron’s disobedience, and the curse

He took into his bosom, prove a warning,

A monitor to thee, to keep thy duty

Firm and unshaken.

*Car.* May those rankling wounds

Which Biron’s disobedience gave my father,

Be heal’d by me.

*C. Bald.* With tears I thank thee, Carlos—

And may’st thou ever feel those inward joys,

Thy duty gives thy father—but, my son,

We must not let resentment choke our justice;

’Tis fit that Villeroy know he has no claim

From me, in right of Isabella——Biron,

(Whose name brings tears) when wedded to this  
woman,

By me abandon’d, sunk the little fortune

His uncle left, in vanity and fondness:

I am possess’d of those your brother’s papers,

Which now are Villeroy’s, and should aught remain,

In justice it is his; from me to him

You shall convey them——follow me, and take ’em.

[*Exit C. Baldwin.*]

*Car.* Yes, I will take ’em; but ere I part with ’em,

I will be sure my interest will not suffer

By these his high, refin’d, fantastic notions

Of equity and right—What a paradox

Is man! My father here, who boasts his honour,

And even but now was warm in praise of justice,



Can steel his heart against the widow's tears,  
And infant's wants; the widow and the infant  
Of Biron; of his son, his fav'rite son.  
'Tis ever thus weak minds, who court opinion,  
And dead to virtuous feeling, hide their wants  
In pompous affectation—Now to Villeroy—  
Ere this his friends, for he is much belov'd,  
Crowd to his house, and with their nuptial songs  
Awake the wedded pair: I'll join the throng,  
And in my face, at least, bear joy and friendship.

[Exit.

## SCENE II.

*A Ball in VILLEROY's House. A Band of Music,  
with the Friends of VILLEROY.*

*Enter a Servant.*

*1st Fr.* Where's your master, my good friend?

*Ser.* Within, sir,

Preparing for the welcome of his friends.

*1st Fr.* Acquaint him we are here: yet stay,

The voice of music gently shall surprise him,  
And breathe our salutations to his ear.

Strike up the strain to Villeroy's happiness,  
'To Isabella's—But he's here already.

*Enter VILLEROY.*

*Vil.* My friends, let me embrace you:

Welcome all——

What means this preparation? [Seeing the Music.

*1st Fr.* A slight token

Of our best wishes for your growing happiness——

You must permit our friendship——

*Vil.* You oblige me——

*1st Fr.* But your lovely bride,

That wonder of her sex, she must appear,  
And add new brightness to this happy morning.

*Vil.* She is not yet prepar'd; and let her will,  
My worthiest friend, determine her behaviour;  
'To win, and not to force her disposition,  
Has been my seven year's task. She will anon  
Speak welcome to you all. The music stays.

[Villeroy and his Friends seat themselves.

## EPITHALAMIUM.

AIR.

*Woman.* Let all, let all be gay,  
Begin the rapt'rous lay;  
Let mirth; let mirth and joy,  
Each happy hour employ  
Of this fair bridal day.

*Man.* Ye love-wing'd hours, your flight,  
Your downy flight prepare,  
Bring ev'ry soft delight  
To soothe the brave and fair.  
Hail, happy pair, thus in each other blest;  
Be ever free from care, of ev'ry joy possess'd!

*Vil.* I thank you for the proof of your affection :  
I am so much transported with the thoughts  
Of what I am, I know not what I do.  
My Isabella!—but possessing her,  
Who would not lose himself?—You'll pardon me—  
Oh! there was nothing wanting to my soul,  
But the kind wishes of my loving friends—  
“ But our collation waits;” where's Carlos now ?  
Methinks I am but half myself without him.

*2d Fr.* This is wonderful ! Married a night and a day, and yet in raptures.

*Vil.* Oh ! when you all get wives, and such as mine,  
(If such another woman can be found)  
You will rave too, dote on the dear content,  
And prattle in their praise out of all bounds.  
“ I cannot speak my bliss ! 'Tis in my head,  
“ 'Tis in my heart, and takes up all my soul—  
“ The labour of my fancy. You'll pardon me ;  
“ About some twelve months hence I may begin  
“ To speak plain sense—Walk in and honour me.”

*Enter ISABELLA.*

My Isabella ! Oh the joy of my heart,  
That I have leave at last to call you mine !  
“ When I give up that title to the charins

"Of any other wish, be nothing mine :"  
But let me look upon you, view you well.  
This is a welcome gallantry indeed !  
I durst not ask, but it was kind to grant,  
Just at this time : dispensing with your dress  
Upon this second day to greet our friends.

*Isa.* Black might be ominous ;  
I would not bring ill luck along with me.

*Vil.* Oh ! if your melancholy thoughts could change  
With shifting of your dress—Time has done cures  
Incredible this way, and may again.

*Isa.* I could have wish'd, if you had thought it fit,  
Our marriage had not been so public.

*Vil.* Do not you grudge me my excess of love ;  
That was a cause it could not be conceal'd :  
Besides, 'twould injure the opinion  
I have of my good fortune, having you ;  
And lessen it in other people's thoughts,  
"Busy on such occasions to enquire,  
"Had it been private."

*Isa.* I have no more to say.

*Enter CARLOS.*

*Vil.* My Carlos too, who came in to the support  
Of our bad fortune, has an honest right,  
In better times, to share the good with us.

*Car.* I come to claim that right, to share your joy ;  
To wish you joy ; and find it in myself ;  
"For a friend's happiness reflects a warmth,  
"A kindly comfort into every heart  
"That is not envious.

*Vil.* "He must be a friend,  
"Who is not envious of a happiness  
"So absolute as mine ; but if you are  
"(As I have reason to believe you are)  
"Concern'd for my well-being, there's the cause ;  
"Thank her for what I am, and what must be."

*[Music flourish.]*

I see you mean a second entertainment.  
My dearest Isabella, you must hear  
The raptures of my friends ; from thee they spring

Thy virtues have diffus'd themselves around,  
And made them all as happy as myself.

*Isa.* I feel their favours with a grateful heart,  
And willingly comply.

## RECITATIVE

Take the gifts the gods intend ye;  
Grateful meet the proffer'd joy:  
Truth and honour shall attend ye;  
Charms that ne'er can change or cloy.

## DUETTO.

*Man.* Oh, the raptures of possessing,  
Taking beauty to thy arms!

*Woman.* Oh the joy, the lasting blessing,  
When with virtue beauty charms!

*Man.* Purer flames shall gently warm ye;

*Woman,* Love and honour both shall charm thee.

*Both.* Oh the raptures of, &c. &c.

## CHORUS.

Far from hence be care and strife,  
Far the pang that tortures life:  
May the circling minutes prove  
One sweet round of peace and love!

*Car.* 'Tis fine indeed!  
You'll take my advice another time, sister.

*Vil.* What have you done? A rising smile  
Stole from her thoughts, just red'ning on her cheek,  
And you have dash'd it.

*Car.* I'm sorry for't.

*Vil.* My friends, you will forgive me, when I own,  
I must prefer her peace to all the world.

Come, Isabella, let us lead the way:

Within we'll speak our welcome to our friends,

And crown the happy festival with joy. [*Exeunt.*]

## SCENE III.

*A Room. Enter SAMPSON and Nurse.*

*Samp.* Ay, marry, nurse, here's a master indeed!  
He'll double our wages for us! If he comes on as

fast with my lady, as he does with his servants, we are all in the way to be well pleased.

*Nurse.* He's in a rare humour, if she be in as good a one——

*Samp.* If she be, marry, we may e'en say, they have begot it upon one another.

*Nurse.* Well; why don't you go back again to your old count? You thought your throat cut, I warrant you, to be turn'd out of a nobleman's service.

*Samp.* For the future, I will never serve in a house where the master or mistress of it lie single: they are out of humour with every body when they are not pleased themselves. Now, this matrimony makes every thing go well. There's mirth and money stirring about when those matters go as they should do.

*Nurse.* Indeed, this matrimony, Sampson——

*Samp.* Ah, nurse! this matrimony is a very good thing——but, what, now my lady is married, I hope we shall have company come to the house: there's something always coming from one gentleman or other upon those occasions, if my lady loves company. This feasting looks well, Nurse.

*Nurse.* Odso, my master! we must not be seen.

[*Exeunt.*]

*Enter VILLEROY, with a Letter, and ISABELLA.*

*Vil.* I must away this moment—see his letter, Sign'd by himself: alas! he could no more; My brother's desperate, and cannot die In peace, but in my arms.

*Isa.* So suddenly!

*Vil.* Suddenly taken, on the road to Brussels, To do us honour, love; unfortunate! 'Thus to be torn from thee, and all those charms, Tho' cold to me and dead.

*Isa.* I'm sorry for the cause.

*Vil.* Oh! could I think, Could I persuade myself that your concern For me, or for my absence, were the spring, The fountain of these melancholy thoughts, My heart would dance, spite of the sad occasion,

And be a gay companion in my journey ;  
But——

*Enter CARLOS from Supper.*

My good Carlos, why have you left my friends?

*Car.* They are departed home.

They saw some sudden melancholy news  
Had stolen the lively colour from your cheek——  
You had withdrawn; the bride, alarm'd, had follow'd :  
Mere ceremony had been constraint ; and this  
Good-natur'd rudeness——

*Vil.* Was the more obliging.

There, Carlos, is the cause. [ *Gives the letter.* ]

*Car.* Unlucky accident !

Th' archbishop of Malines, your worthy brother—  
With him to-night ! Sister, will you permit it?

*Vil.* It must be so.

*Isa.* You hear it must be so.

*Vil.* Oh, that it must !

*Car.* To leave your bride so soon.

*Vil.* But having the possession of my love,  
I am the better able to support  
My absence, in the hopes of my return.

*Car.* Your stay will be but short ?

*Vil.* It will seem long !

The longer that my Isabella sighs :  
I shall be jealous of this rival, grief,  
“ That you indulge and fondle in my absence.”  
It takes so full possession of thy heart,  
There is not room enough for mighty love.

*Enter Servant, and bows.*

My horses wait: farewell, my love ! You, Carlos,  
Will act a brother's part, till I return,  
And be the guardian here. All, all I have  
That's dear to me, I give up to your care.

*Car.* And I receive her as a friend and brother.

*Vil.* Nay, stir not, love ! for the night air is cold,  
And the dews fall—Here be our end of parting ;  
Carlos will see me to my horse. [ *Exit with Carlos.* ]

*Isa.* Oh, may thy brother better all thy hopes !  
Adieu.



" A sudden melancholy bakes my blood!  
 " Forgive me, Villeroy—I do not find  
 " That cheerful gratitude thy service asks:  
 " Yet if I know my heart, and sure I do,  
 " 'Tis not averse from honest obligation.  
 " I'll to my chamber, and to bed; my mind,  
 " My harass'd mind, is weary." [Exit.

ACT IV. SCENE I.

*The Street. Enter BIRON and BELFORD, just arrived.*

*Biron.* THE longest day will have an end; we are got home at last.

*Bel.* We have got our legs at liberty; and liberty is home wherever we go; though mine lies most in England.

*Bir.* Pray let me call this yours: for what I can command in Brussels, you shall find your own. I have a father here, who, perhaps, after seven years absence, and costing him nothing in my travels, may be glad to see me. You know my story—How does my disguise become me?

*Bel.* Just as you would have it; 'tis natural, and will conceal you.

*Bir.* To-morrow you shall be sure to find me here, as early as you please. This is the house; you have observed the street.

*Bel.* I warrant you; I ha'nt many visits to make before I come to you.

*Bir.* To-night I have some affairs that will oblige me to be in private.

*Bel.* A good bed is the privatest affair that I desire to be engaged in to-night; your directions will carry me to my lodgings. [Exit.

*Bir.* Good night, my friend. [Knocks.

'The long expected moment is arriv'd!  
 And if all here is well, my past sorrows  
 Will only heighten my excess of joy;  
 And nothing will remain to wish or hope for!  
 [Knocks again.

*Enter SAMPSON.*

*Samp.* Who's there? What would you have?

*Bir.* Is your lady at home, friend?

*Samp.* Why truly, friend, it is my employment to answer impertinent questions : but for my lady's being at home, or no, that's just as my lady pleases.

*Bir.* But how shall I know whether it pleases her or no?

*Samp.* Why, if you'll take my word for it, you may carry your errand back again : she never pleases to see any body at this time of night that she does not know ; and by your dress and appearance I'm sure you must be a stranger to her.

*Bir.* But I have business ; and you don't know how that may please her.

*Samp.* Nay, if you have business, she is the best judge whether your business will please her or no ; therefore I will proceed in my office, and know of my lady, whether or no she is pleas'd to be at home, or no——

*[Going.]*

*Enter Nurse.*

*Nurse.* Who's that you are so busy withal? Methinks you might have found out an answer in fewer words ; but, Sampson, you love to hear yourself prate sometimes, as well as your betters, that I must say for you. Let me come to him. Who would you speak with, stranger?

*Bir.* With your mistress, if you could help me to speak to your lady.

*Nurse.* Yes, sir, I can help you in a civil way : but can nobody do your business but my lady?

*Bir.* Not so well ; but if you carry her this ring, she'll know my business better.

*Nurse.* There's no love-letter in it, I hope ; you look like a civil gentleman. In an honest way, I may bring you an answer.

*[Exit.]*

*Bir.* My old nurse, only a little older! "They say  
" the tongue grows always : mercy on me ! then  
" her's is seven years longer since I left her." Yet

there's something in these servants' folly pleases me ;  
the cautious conduct of the family appears, and speaks  
in their impertinence. Well, mistress——

*Nurse returns.*

*Nurse.* I have deliver'd your ring, sir ; pray Heav'n  
you bring no bad news along with you.

*Bir.* Quite contrary, I hope.

*Nurse.* Nay, I hope so too ; but my lady was very  
much surpris'd when I gave it her. Sir, I am but a  
servant, as a body may say ; but if you'll walk in,  
that I may shut the doors, for we keep very orderly  
hours, I can shew you into the parlour, and help you  
to an answer, perhaps, as soon as those that are wiser.

[*Exit.*

*Bir.* I'll follow you——

Now all my spirits hurry to my heart,

And every sense has taken the alarm

At this approaching interview !

Heav'ns ! how I tremble ! [*Exit into the house.*

## SCENE II.

*A Chamber. Enter ISABELLA.*

*Isa.* I've heard of witches, magic spells, and charms,  
'That have made nature start from her old course :

The sun has been eclips'd, the moon drawn down

From her career, still paler, and subdued

To the abuses of this under world !

Now I believe all possible. This ring,

This little ring, with necromantic force,

Has rais'd the ghost of pleasure to my fears :

Conjur'd the sense of honour, and of love,

Into such shapes, they fright me from myself !

I dare not think of them——

“ I'll call you when I want you. [*Servant goes out.*”

*Enter Nurse.*

*Nurse.* Madam, the gentleman's below.

*Isa.* I had forgot : pray let me speak with him.

[*Exit Nurse.*

This ring was the first present of my love

To Biron, my first husband ; I must blush  
To think I have a second. Biron died  
(Still to my loss) at Candy ; there's my hope.  
Oh, do I live to hope that he died there !  
It must be so : he's dead, and this ring left  
By his last breath, to some known faithful friend,  
To bring me back again ;

[Biron introduced—Nurse retires.

That's all I have to trust to——  
My fears were woman's——I have view'd him all :  
And let me, let me say it to myself,  
I live again, and rise but from his tomb.

*Bir.* Have you forgot me quite ?

*Isa.* Forgot you !

*Bir.* Then farewell my disguise, and my misfortunes.  
My Isabella !

[*He goes to her ; she shrieks, and falls in a swoon.*

*Isa.* Ha !

*Bir.* Oh ! come again :

Thy Biron summons thee to life and love ;  
“ Once I had charms to wake thee : ”  
Thy once-lov'd, ever-loving husband calls——  
Thy Biron speaks to thee.

*Isa.* My husband ! Biron !

*Bir.* Excess of love and joy, for my return,  
Has overpower'd her——I was to blame  
To take thy sex's softness unprepar'd :  
But sinking thus, thus dying in my arms,  
This ecstasy has made my welcome more  
Than words could say : words may be counterfeit,  
False-coin'd, and current only from the tongue,  
Without the mind ; but passion's in the soul,  
And always speaks the heart.

*Isa.* Where have I been ? Why do you keep him  
from me ?

I know his voice : my life upon the wing,  
Hears the soft lure that brings me back again ;  
'Tis he himself, my Biron, the dear man !  
My true-lov'd husband ! Do I hold you fast,  
Never to part again ? “ Can I believe it ?

“ Nothing but you could work so great a change,  
“ There’s more than life itself in dying here.”  
If I must fall, death’s welcome in these arms.

*Bir.* Live ever in these arms.

*Isa.* But pardon me,  
Excuse the wild disorder of my soul :  
The joy, the strange surprising joy of seeing you,  
Of seeing you again, distracted me——

*Bir.* Thou everlasting goodness !

*Isa.* Answer me :  
What hand of Providence has brought you back  
To your own home again ? O, satisfy  
Th’ impatience of my heart : I long to know  
The story of your sufferings. “ You would think  
“ Your pleasures sufferings, so long remov’d  
“ From Isabella’s love.” But tell me all,  
For every thought confounds me.

*Bir.* My best life ; at leisure, all.

*Isa.* We thought you dead ; kill’d at the siege of  
Candy.

*Bir.* There I fell among the dead ;  
But hopes of life reviving from my wounds,  
I was preserv’d but to be made a slave :  
I often writ to my hard father, but never had  
An answer ; I writ to thee too——

*Isa.* What a world of woe  
Had been prevented but in hearing from you !

*Bir.* Alas ! thou could’st not help me.

*Isa.* You do not know how much I could ha’ done ;  
At least, I’m sure I could have suffer’d all :  
I would have sold myself to slavery,  
Without redemption ; giv’n up my child,  
The dearest part of me, to basest wants——

*Bir.* My little boy !

*Isa.* My life, but to have heard  
You were alive, which now too late I find. [*Aside.*

*Bir.* No more, my love ; complaining of the past,  
We lose the present joy. ’Tis over price  
Of all my pains, that thus we meet again——  
I have a thousand things to say to thee——

*Isa.* Would I were past the hearing. [*Aside.*

*Bir.* How does my child, my boy ; my father, too,  
I hear he's living still?

*Isa.* Well both, both well ;  
And may he prove a father to your hopes,  
Though we have found him none.

*Bir.* Come, no more tears.

*Isa.* Seven long years of sorrow for your loss,  
Have mourn'd with me——

*Bir.* And all my days behind  
Shall be employ'd in a kind recompence  
For thy afflictions—Can't I see my boy?

*Isa.* He's gone to bed : I'll have him brought to you.

*Bir.* To-morrow I shall see him ; I want rest  
Myself, after this weary pilgrimage.

*Isa.* Alas ! what shall I get for you?

*Bir.* Nothing but rest, my love ! To-night I would  
not

Be known, if possible, to your family :  
I see my Nurse is with you ; her welcome  
Wou'd be tedious at this time ;  
To-morrow will do better.

*Isa.* I'll dispose of her, and order every thing  
As you wou'd have it. [*Exit.*

*Bir.* Grant me but life, good Heav'n, and give the  
means,

To make this wondrous goodness some amends :  
And let me then forget her, if I can !  
O ! she deserves of me much more than I  
Can lose for her, though I again cou'd venture  
A father, and his fortune, for her love !  
You wretched fathers, blind as fortune all !  
Not to perceive that such a woman's worth  
Weighs down the portions you provide your sons :  
What is your trash, what all your heaps of gold,  
Compar'd to this, my heart-felt happiness?

[*Bursts into tears.*

What has she, in my absence, undergone?  
I must not think of that ; it drives me back  
Upon myself, the fatal cause of all.



ISABELLA *returns.*

*Isa.* I have obey'd your pleasure ;  
Every thing is ready for you.

*Bir.* I can want nothing here ; possessing thee,  
All my desires are carried to their aim  
Of happiness : there's no room for a wish,  
But to continue still this blessing to me :  
I know the way ; my love ; " I shall sleep sound."

*Isa.* Shall I attend you ?

*Bir.* By no means ;  
I've been so long a slave to others' pride,  
To learn, at least, to wait upon myself ;  
You'll make haste after—— [ *Goes in.*

*Isa.* I'll but say my prayers, and follow you——  
My prayers ! no, I must never pray again.  
Prayers have their blessings to reward our hopes,  
But I have nothing left to hope for more.  
What Heav'n could give, I have enjoy'd ; but now  
The baneful planet rises on my fate,  
And what's to come is a long line of woe,  
Yet I may shorten it——

I promis'd him to follow——him !  
Is he without a name ? Biron, my husband,  
To follow him to bed——my husband ! ha !  
What then is Villeroy ? But yesterday  
That very bed receiv'd him for its lord,

" Yet a warm witness of my broken vows."  
Oh, Biron, hadst thou come but one day sooner,  
I would have follow'd thee through beggary,  
Through all the chances of this weary life :  
Wander'd the many ways of wretchedness  
With thee, to find a hospitable grave ;  
For that's the only bed that's left me now. [ *Weeping.*  
——What's to be done——for something must be done.  
Two husbands ! yet not one ! By both enjoy'd,  
And yet a wife to neither ! Hold, my brain——  
" This is to live in common ! Very beasts,  
" That welcome all they meet, make just such wives.  
" My reputation ! Oh, 'twas all was left me !

“ The virtuous pride of an uncensur’d life,  
“ Which the dividing tongues of Biron’s wrongs,  
“ And Villeroy’s resentments, tear asunder,  
“ To gorge the throats of the blaspheming rabble.  
“ This is the best of what can come to-morrow,  
“ Besides old Baldwin’s triumph in my ruin :  
“ I cannot bear it——  
“ Therefore no morrow :” Ha! a lucky thought  
Works the right way to rid me of ’em all;  
All the reproaches, infamies, and scorns,  
That every tongue and finger will find for me.  
Let the just horror of my apprehensions  
But keep me warm—no matter what can come.  
’Tis but a blow—yet I will see him first,  
Have a last look to heighten my despair,  
And then to rest for ever.——

*BIRON meets her.*

*Bir.* Despair and rest for ever! Isabella!  
These words are far from thy condition!  
And be they ever so. I heard thy voice,  
And could not bear thy absence: come, my love!  
You have staid long; there’s nothing, nothing sure  
Now to despair of in succeeding fate.

*Isa.* I am contented to be miserable,  
But not this way: I’ve been too long abus’d,  
And can believe no more.  
Let me sleep on to be deceiv’d no more.

*Bir.* Look up, my love; I never did deceive thee,  
Nor never can; believe thyself, thy eyes,  
That first inflam’d and lit me to my love,  
Those stars, that still must guide me to my joys—

*Isa.* And me to my undoing: I look round,  
And find no path, but leading to the grave.

*Bir.* I cannot understand thee.

*Isa.* “ My good friends above,  
“ I thank ’em, have at last found out a way  
“ To make my fortune perfect; having you,  
“ I need no more; my fate is finish’d here.

“ *Bir.* Both our ill fates, I hope.

“ *Isa.* Hope is a lying, fawning flatterer,  
 “ That shews the fair side only of our fortunes,  
 “ To cheat us easier into our fall;  
 “ A trusted friend, who only can betray you;  
 “ Never believe him more.”—If marriages  
 Are made in Heav’n, they should be happier.  
 Why was I made this wretch?

*Bir.* Has marriage made thee wretched?

*Isa.* Miserable, beyond the reach of comfort.

*Bir.* Do I live to hear thee say so?

*Isa.* Why! what did I say?

*Bir.* That I have made thee miserable.

*Isa.* No: you are my only earthly happiness;  
 And my false tongue bely’d my honest heart,  
 If it said otherwise.

*Bir.* And yet you said,  
 Your marriage made you miserable.

*Isa.* I know not what I said:  
 I’ve said too much, unless I could speak all.

*Bir.* Thy words are wild; my eyes, my ears, my  
 heart,

Were all so full of thee, so much employ’d  
 In wonder of thy charms, I could not find it;  
 Now I perceive it plain——

*Isa.* You’ll tell no body—— [*Distractedly.*

*Bir.* Thou art not well.

*Isa.* Indeed I am not; I knew that before;  
 But where’s the remedy?

*Bir.* Rest will relieve thy cares; come, come, no  
 more;

I’ll banish sorrow from thee.

*Isa.* Banish first the cause.

*Bir.* Heav’n knows how willingly.

*Isa.* You are the only cause.

*Bir.* Am I the cause? the cause of thy misfortunes?

*Isa.* The fatal innocent cause of all my woes.

*Bir.* Is this my welcome home? This the reward  
 Of all my miseries, long labours, pains,  
 And pining wants of wretched slavery,  
 Which I’ve outliv’d, only in hopes of thee:

Am I thus paid at last for deathless love,  
And call'd the cause of thy misfortunes now?

*Isa.* Enquire no more; 'twill be explain'd too soon.  
[*She's going off.*]

*Bir.* What! canst thou leave me too? [*He stays her.*]

*Isa.* Pray let me go:

For both our sakes, permit me——

*Bir.* Rack me not with imaginations  
Of things impossible——Thou canst not mean  
What thou hast said——Yet something she must mean.  
—'Twas madness all——Compose thyself, my love!  
The fit is past; all may be well again:  
Let us to-bed.

*Isa.* To bed! You've rais'd the storm  
Will sever us for ever. Oh, Biron!  
“ While I have life, still I must call you mine :  
“ I know I am, and always was, unworthy  
“ To be the happy partner of your love ;  
“ And now must never, never share it more.  
“ But oh ! if ever I was dear to you,  
“ As sometimes you have thought me,” on my knees,  
(The last time I shall care to be believ'd)  
I beg you, beg to think me innocent,  
Clear of all crimes, that thus can banish me  
From this world's comforts, in my losing you.

“ *Bir.* Where will this end ?

“ *Isa.* The rugged hand of fate has got between  
“ Our meeting hearts, and thrusts them from their  
“ joys :”

Since we must part——

*Bir.* Nothing shall ever part us.

“ *Isa.* Parting's the least that is set down for me:  
“ Heav'n has decreed, and we must suffer all.

“ *Bir.* I know thee innocent: I know myself so:  
“ Indeed we both have been unfortunate;  
“ But sure misfortunes ne'er were faults in love.”

*Isa.* Oh ! there's a fatal story to be told ;  
Be deaf to that, as Heav'n has been to me!  
And rot the tongue that shall reveal my shame :”

When thou shalt hear how much thou hast been  
wrong'd,

How wilt thou curse thy fond believing heart,  
Tear me from the warm bosom of thy love,  
And throw me like a pois'nous weed away:

"Can I bear that? Bear to be curst and torn,

"And thrown out of thy family and name,

"Like a disease?" Can I bear this from thee?

"I never can:" No, all things have their end.

When I am dead, forgive and pity me. [Exit.

Bir. Stay, my Isabella——

What can she mean? These doubtings will distract  
me:

Some hidden mischief soon will burst to light;

I cannot bear it——I must be satisfied——

'Tis she, my wife, must clear this darkness to me

*She shall—If the sad tale at last must come!*

*She is my fate, and best can speak my doom.*

[Exit.

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## ACT V. SCENE I.

*Enter BIRON, Nurse following him.*

Biron. I know enough; th' important question  
Of life or death, fearful to be resolv'd,

Is clear'd to me: I see where it must end;

And need enquire no more—Pray, let me have

Pen, ink, and paper; I must write a-while,

And then I'll try to rest——to rest for ever!

[Exit Nurse.

Poor Isabella! now I know the cause,

The cause of thy distress, and cannot wonder

That it has turn'd thy brain. If I look back

Upon thy loss, it will distract me too.

Oh, any curse but this might be remov'd!

But 'twas the rancorous malignity

Of all ill stars combin'd, of heav'n, and fate——

Hbld, hold my impious tongue—Alas! I rave:

Why do I tax the stars, or heav'n, or fate?

They are all innocent of driving us

Into despair ; they have not urg'd my doom ;  
My father and my brother are my fates,  
That drive me to my ruin. They knew well  
I was alive. Too well they knew how dear  
My Isabella——Oh, my wife no more!  
How dear her love was to me——Yet they stood,  
With a malicious silent joy, stood by,  
And saw her give up all my happiness,  
The treasure of her beauty to another:  
“ Stood by, and saw her marry'd to another :”  
Oh, cruel father ! and unnatural brother !  
“ Shall I not tell you that you have undone me ?”  
I have but to accuse you of my wrongs,  
And then to fall forgotten——Sleep or death  
Sits heavy on me, and benumbs my pains :  
Either is welcome ; but the hand of death  
Works always sure, and best can close my eyes.

[*Exit Biron.*]

*Enter Nurse and SAMPSON.*

*Nurse.* Here's strange things towards, Sampson :  
what will be the end of 'em, do you think ?

*Samp.* Nay, marry, Nurse, I can't see so far ; but  
the law, I believe, is on Biron, the first husband's  
side.

*Nurse.* Yes ; no question, he has the law on his side.

*Samp.* For I have heard, the law says, a woman  
must be a widow all out seven years, before she can  
marry again, according to law.

*Nurse.* Ay, so it does ; and our lady has not been  
a widow all together seven years.

*Samp.* Why then, Nurse, mark my words, and say  
I told you so : the man must have his wife again, and  
all will do well.

*Nurse.* But if our master, Villeroy, comes back  
again——

*Samp.* Why, if he does, he is not the first man that  
has had his wife taken from him.

*Nurse.* For fear of the worst, will you go to the  
old count, desire him to come as soon as he can ; there  
may be mischief, and he is able to prevent it.



*Samp.* Now you say something; now I take you, Nurse; that will do well, indeed: mischief should be prevented; a little thing will make a quarrel, when there's a woman in the way. I'll about it instantly.—

[*Exeunt.*]

## SCENE II.

*Draws, shews BIRON asleep on a Couch. Enter ISABELLA.*

*Isa.* Asleep so soon! Oh, happy! happy thou, Who thus can sleep! I never shall sleep more—— If then to sleep be to be happy, he Who sleeps the longest is the happiest; Death is the longest sleep—Oh, have a care! Mischief will thrive apace. Never wake more.

[*To Biron.*]

If thou didst ever love thy Isabella,  
To-morrow must be doomsday to thy peace.  
——The sight of him disarms ev'n death itself.  
——The starting transport of new quick'ning life  
Gives just such hopes; and pleasure grows again  
With looking on him—Let me look my last——  
But is a look enough for parting love!  
Sure I may take a kiss——Where am I going——  
Help, help me, Villeroy!—Mountains and seas  
Divide your love, never to meet my shame.

[*Throws herself upon the Floor; after a short Pause, she raises herself upon her Elbow.*]

What will this battle of the brain do with me!  
This little ball, this ravag'd province, long  
Cannot maintain—The globe of earth wants room  
And food for such a war—I find I'm going——  
Famine, plagues, and flames,  
Wide waste and desolation do your work  
Upon the world, and then devour yourselves.  
——The scene shifts fast——[*She rises.*] and now 'tis  
better with me;

Conflicting passions have at last unhing'd  
The great machine! the soul itself seems chang'd!  
Oh, 'tis a happy revolution here!  
“The reas'ning faculties are all dispos'd;

" Judgment, and understanding, common sense,  
 " Driv'n out as traitors to the public peace.  
 " Now I'm reveng'd upon my memory,  
 " Her seat dug up, where all the images  
 " Of a long mis-spent life, were rising still,  
 " To glare a sad reflection of my crimes,  
 " And stab a conscience thro' 'em! You are safe,  
 " You monitors of mischief! What a change!  
 " Better and better still! This is the infant state  
 " Of innocence, before the birth of care.  
 " My thoughts are smooth as the Elysian plains,  
 " Without a rub: the drowsy falling streams  
 " Invite me to their slumbers.  
 " Would I were landed there—" [*Sinks into a Chair.*  
 What noise was that? a knocking at the gate!  
 It may be Villeroy——No matter who.

*Bir.* Come, Isabella, come.——

*Isa.* Hark! I'm call'd!

*Bir.* You stay too long from me.

*Isa.* A man's voice! in my bed! How came he there?

Nothing but villainy in this bad world; [*Rises.*  
 " Coveting neighbours' goods, or neighbours' wives:"  
 Here's physic for your fever.

[*Draws a dagger, and goes backward to the couch.*  
 " Breathing a vein is the old remedy."

If husbands go to Heav'n,

Where do they go that send 'em?—This to try——

[*Just going to stab him, he rises, she knows him, and shrieks.*

What do I see!

*Bir.* Isabella, arm'd!

*Isa.* Against my husband's life!

" Who, but the wretch, most reprobate to grace,

" Despair e'er hardened for damnation,

" Could think of such a deed—Murder my husband!"

*Bir.* Thou didst not think it.

*Isa.* Madness has brought me to the gates of hell,  
 And there has left me. " Oh, the frightful change  
 " Of my distractions! Or is this interval

"Of reason but to aggravate my woes,  
"To drive the horror back with greater force  
"Upon my soul, and fix me mad for ever?"

*Bir.* Why dost thou fly me so!

*Isa.* I cannot bear his sight; distraction, come,  
Possess me all, and take me to thyself!  
Shake off thy chains, and hasten to my aid;  
Thou art my only cure—Like other friends,  
"He will not come to my necessities;  
"Then I must go to find the tyrant out:  
"Which is the nearest way?" [*Running out.*

*Bir.* Poor Isabella, she's not in a condition  
To give me any comfort, if she could:  
Lost to herself—as quickly I shall be  
To all the world—Horrors come fast around me;  
My mind is overcast—the gath'ring clouds  
Darken the prospect—I approach the brink,  
And soon must leap the precipice! Oh, Heav'n!  
While yet my senses are my own; thus kneeling,  
Let me implore thy mercies on my wife:  
Release her from her pangs; and if my reason,  
O'erwhelm'd with miseries, sink before the tempest,  
Pardon those crimes despair may bring upon me.

[*Rises.*

*Enter Nurse.*

*Nurse.* Sir, there's somebody at the door must  
needs speak with you; he won't tell his name.

*Bir.* I come to him. [*Exit Nurse.*

'Tis Belford, I suppose; he little knows  
Of what has happened here; I wanted him,  
Must employ his friendship, and then— [*Exit.*

### SCENE III.

*The Street. Enter CARLOS with three Ruffians.*

*Car.* A younger brother! I was one too long,  
Not to prevent my being so again.  
We must be sudden. Younger brothers are  
But lawful bastards of another name,  
Thrust out of their nobility of birth  
And family, and tainted into trades.

Shall I be one of them—Bow, and retire,  
 To make more room for the unwieldy heir  
 To play the fool in? No——  
 But how shall I prevent it?—Biron comes  
 To take possession of my father's love—  
 Would that were all; there's a birth-right too  
 That he will seize. Besides, if Biron lives,  
 He will unfold some practices, which I  
 Cannot well answer—therefore he shall die;  
 This night must be dispos'd of: I have means  
 That will not fail my purpose.—Here he comes.

*Enter BIRON.*

*Bir.* Ha! am I beset! I live but to revenge me.

*[They surround him fighting; Villeroy enters with two Servants; they rescue him; Carlos and his Party fly.]*

*Vil.* How are you, sir? Mortally hurt I fear.  
 Take care, and lead him in.

*Bir.* I thank you for the goodness, sir; tho' 'tis  
 Bestow'd upon a very wretch; and death,  
 Tho' from a villain's hand, had been to me  
 An act of kindness, and the height of mercy—  
 But I thank you, sir. *[He is led in.]*

#### SCENE IV.

*The Inside of the House. Enter ISABELLA.*

*Isa.* Murder my husband! Oh! I must not dare  
 To think of living on; my desperate hand  
 In a mad rage may offer it again.  
 Stab me any where but there. Here's room enough  
 In my own breast to act the fury in,  
 The proper scene of mischief. “Villeroy comes;  
 “Villeroy and Biron come! Oh! hide me from 'em—  
 “They rack, they tear; let 'em carve out my limbs,  
 “Divide my body to their equal claims:  
 “My soul is only Biron's; that is free,  
 “And thus I strike for him and liberty.”  
*[Going to stab herself, Villeroy runs in and prevents her, by taking the Dagger from her.]*

*Vil.* Angels defend and save thee!

Attempt thy precious life! "the treasury  
"Of nature's sweets! life of my little world!"  
Lay violent hands upon thy innocent self!

*Isa.* Swear I am innocent, and I'll believe you.  
What would you have with me? Pray let me go.

"—Are you there, sir? You are the very man

"Have done all this—You would have made

"Me believe you married me; but the fool

"Was wiser, I thank you: 'tis not all gospel

"You men preach upon that subject."

*Vil.* Dost thou not know me, love?

*Isa.* O yes: very well. [*Staring on him.*]

You are the widow's comforter: "that marries

"Any woman when her husband's out of the way:

"But I'll never, never take your word again.

*Vil.* "I am thy loving husband."

'Tis *Villeroy*, thy husband.

*Isa.* I have none; no husband—— [*Weeping.*]

Never had but one, and he died at Candy,

"Did he not? I'm sure you told me so; you,

"Or somebody, with just such a lying look,

"As you have now." Speak, did he not die there?

*Vil.* He did, my life.

*Isa.* But swear it, quickly swear,

*BIRON enters bloody, and leaning upon his Sword.*

Before that screaming evidence appears,

In bloody proof against me——

[*She seeing Biron swoons into a Chair; Villeroy helps her.*]

*Vil.* Help there! Nurse, where are you!

Ha! I am distracted too!

[*Going to call for help, sees Biron.*]

Biron alive!

*Bir.* The only wretch on earth that must not live.

*Vil.* Biron or Villeroy must not, that's decreed.

*Bir.* You've sav'd me from the hands of murderers:  
Would you had not, for life's my greatest plague—  
And then, of all the world, you are the man

I would not be oblig'd to—Isabella!

I came to fall before thee: I had dy'd

Happy not to have found your Villeroy here:

A long farewell and a last parting kiss. [*Kisses her.*

*Vil.* A kiss! confusion! it must be your last.

[*Draws.*

*Bir.* I know it must—Here I give up that death

You but delay'd: since what is past has been

The work of fate, thus we must finish it.

Thrust home, be sure.

[*Faints.*

*Vil.* Alas! he faints! some help there.

*Bir.* 'Tis all in vain, my sorrows soon will end—

Oh, Villeroy! let a dying wretch entreat you

'To take this letter to my father. My Isabella!

Couldst thou but hear me, my last words should bless thee.

I cannot, tho' in death, bequeath her to thee. [*To Vil.*

But I could hope my boy, my little one,

Might find a father in thee—Oh, I faint—

I can no more—Hear me, Heav'n! Oh! support

My wife, my Isabella—Bless my child!

And take a poor unhappy—

[*Dies.*

*Vil.* He's gone—Let what will be the consequence,

I'll give it him. I have involv'd myself,

And would be clear'd; that must be thought on now.

My care of her is lost in wild amaze. [*Going to Isa.*

“Are you all dead within there? Where, where are  
“you?”

*Good Nurse take care of her; I'll bring you more help,*

[*Exit.*

*Isabella comes to herself.*

*Isa.* Where have I been?—Methinks I stand upon

The brink of life, ready to shoot the gulph

That lies between me and the realms of rest:

But still detain'd, I cannot pass the strait;

Deny'd to live, and yet I must not die:

Doom'd to come back, like a complaining ghost,

To my unbury'd body—Here it lies—

[*Throws herself by Biron's body.*

My body, soul, and life, A little dust,



To cover our cold limbs in the dark grave——  
There, there we shall sleep safe and sound together.

*Enter VILLEROY with Servants.*

*Vil.* Poor wretch; upon the ground! she's not herself:  
Remove her from the body. [*Servants going to raise her.*]

*Isa.* Never, never——

You have divorc'd us once, but shall no more——  
Help, help me, Biron?—Ha!—bloody and dead!  
Oh, murder! murder! you have done this deed—  
Vengeance and murder! bury us together—  
Do any thing but part us.

*Vil.* Gently, gently raise her.

She must be forc'd away.

[*She drags the Body after her; they get her into their Arms, and carry her off.*]

*Isa.* Oh, they tear me! Cut off my hands——

Let me leave something with him——

They'll clasp him fast——

Oh, cruel, cruel men!

This you must answer one day.

*Vil.* Good Nurse, take care of her.

[*Nurse follows her.*]

Send for all helps: all, all that I am worth,  
Shall cheaply buy her peace of mind again.

“Be sure you do,” [*To a Servant.*]

“Just as I order'd you.” The storm grows louder.—  
[*Knocking at the door.*]

I am prepar'd for it. Now let them in.

*Enter Count BALDWIN, CARLOS, BELFORD, Friends,  
with Servants.*

*C. Bald.* Oh, do I live to this unhappy day!  
Where is my wretched son?

*Car.* Where is my brother?

[*They see him, and gather about the Body.*]

*Vil.* I hope in Heav'n.

*Car.* Canst thou pity!

Wish him in Heav'n, when thou hast done a deed,  
That must for ever cut thee from the hopes  
Of ever coming there.

*Vil.* I do not blame you——

You have a brother's right to be concern'd  
For his untimely death.

*Car.* Untimely death, indeed!

*Vil.* But yet you must not say, I was the cause.

*Car.* Not you the cause! Why, who should murder him?

We do not ask you to accuse yourself;  
But I must say that you have murder'd him;  
And will say nothing else, till justice draws  
Upon our side, at the loud call of blood,  
To execute so foul a murderer.

*Bel.* Poor Biron! Is this thy welcome home!

*Friend.* Rise, sir; there is a comfort in revenge,  
Which is left you. [To C. Bald.]

*Car.* Take the body hence. [Biron carried off.]

*C. Bald.* What could provoke you?

*Vil.* Nothing could provoke me  
To a base murder, which, I find, you think  
Me guilty of. I know my innocence;  
My servants too can witness that I drew  
My sword in his defence, to rescue him.

*Bel.* Let the servants be call'd.

*Fr.* Let's hear what they can say.

*Car.* What they can say! Why, what should servants say?

They're his accomplices, his instruments,  
And will not charge themselves. If they could do  
A murder for his service, they can lie,  
Lie nimbly, and swear hard to bring him off.  
You say you drew your sword in his defence:  
Who were his enemies? Did he need defence?  
Had he wrong'd any one? Could he have cause  
To apprehend a danger, but from you?  
And yet you rescu'd him!—No, no, he came  
Unseasonably (that was all his crime)  
Unluckily to interrupt your sport:  
You were new marry'd—marry'd to his wife:  
And therefore you, and she, and all of you,  
(For all of you I must believe concern'd)

Combin'd to murder him out of the way.

*Bel.* If it is so——

*Car.* It can be only so.

*Fr.* Indeed it has a face——

*Car.* As black as hell.

*C. Bald.* The law will do me justice : send for the  
magistrate.

*Car.* I'll go myself for him—— [Exit.

*Vil.* These strong presumptions, I must own, indeed,  
Are violent against me ; but I have  
A witness, and on this side Heav'n too.

——Open that door.

[Door opens, and Pedro is brought forward by  
Villeroy's Servants.

Here's one can tell you all.

*Ped.* All, all ; save me but from the rack, I'll confess all.

*Vil.* You and your accomplices design'd  
To murder Biron!——Speak.

*Ped.* We did.

*Vil.* Did you engage upon your private wrongs,  
Or were employ'd ?

*Ped.* He never did us wrong.

*Vil.* You were set on then ?

*Ped.* We were set on.

*Vil.* What do you know of me ?

*Ped.* Nothing, nothing :

You sav'd his life, and have discover'd me.

*Vil.* He has acquitted me.

If you would be resolv'd of any thing,

He stands upon his answer.

*Bel.* Who set you on to act this horrid deed ?

*C. Bald.* I'll know the villain ; give me quick his  
name,

Or I will tear it from thy bleeding heart.

*Ped.* I will confess.

*C. Bald.* Do then.

*Ped.* It was my master, Carlós, your own son.

*C. Bald.* Oh, monstrous ! monstrous ! most unnatural !

*Bel.* Did he employ you to murder his own brother!

*Ped.* He did; and he was with us when 'twas done.

*C. Bald.* If this be true, this horrid, horrid tale,  
It is but just upon me: Biron's wrongs  
Must be reveng'd; and I the cause of all.

*Fr.* What will you do with him?

*C. Bald.* Take him-apart——

I know too much. [Pedro goes in.

*Vil.* I had forgot—Your wretched, dying son.

Gave me this letter for you. [Gives it to Baldwin.

I dare deliver it. It speaks of me;

I pray to have it read.

*C. Bald.* You know the hand.

*Bel.* I know 'tis Biron's hand.

*C. Bald.* Pray read it. [Belford reads the Letter.

' SIR,

' I find I am come only to lay my death at your door. I am now going out of the world; but cannot forgive you, nor my brother Carlos, for not hindering my poor wife Isabella from marrying with Villeroy; when you both knew, from so many letters, that I was alive.—

BIRON.'

*Vil.* How—Did you know it then?

*C. Bald.* Amazement, all!

*Enter CARLOS, with Officers.*

Oh, Carlos, are you come? Your brother here,

Here, in a wretched letter, lays his death

To you and me—Have you done any thing

To hasten his sad end?

*Car.* Bless me, sir, I do any thing! Who, I?

*C. Bald.* He talks of letters that were sent to us.

I never heard of any—Did you know

He was alive?

*Car.* Alive! Heav'n knows, not I.

*C. Bald.* Had you no news of him, from a report,  
Or letter, never?

*Car.* Never, never I.

*Bel.* That's strange, indeed; I know he often writ  
To lay before you the conditions [To C. Bald.  
Of his hard slavery: and more I know,

That he had several answers to his letters.

He said, they came from you ; you are his brother

*Car.* Never from me.

*Bel.* That will appear.

The letters, I believe, are still about him ;

For some of 'em I saw but yesterday.

*C. Bald.* What did those answers say ?

*Bel.* I cannot speak to the particulars ;

But I remember well, the sum of 'em

Was much the same, and all agreed,

That there was nothing to be hop'd from you :

That 'twas your barbarous resolution

To let him perish there.—

*C. Bald.* Oh, Carlos ! Carlos ! hadst thou been a  
brother—

*Car.* This is a plot upon me. I never knew  
He was in slavery, or was alive,  
Or heard of him, before this fatal hour.

*Bel.* There, sir, I must confront you.

He sent you a letter, to my knowledge, last night ;

And you sent him word you would come to him—

I fear you came too soon.

*C. Bald.* 'Tis all too plain.—

Bring out that wretch before him. [*Pedro produced.*]

*Car.* Ha ! Pedro there !—Then I am caught, in-  
deed.

*Bel.* You start at sight of him ;  
He has confess'd the bloody deed.

*Car.* Well then, he has confess'd,  
And I must answer it.

*Bel.* Is there no more ?

*Car.* Why !—what would you have more ? I know  
the worst,

And I expect it.

*C. Bald.* Why hast thou done all this ?

*Car.* Why, that which damns most men has ruin'd  
me ;

The making of my fortune. Biron stood  
Between me and your favour : while he liv'd,  
I had not that ; hardly was thought a son,

And not at all a-kin to your estate.  
 I could not bear a younger brother's lot,  
 To live depending on a courtesy——  
 Had you provided for me like a father,  
 I had been still a brother.

*C. Bald.* 'Tis too true;

I never lov'd thee, as I should have done:  
 It was my sin, and I am punish'd for't.  
 Oh! never may distinction rise again  
 In families; let parents be the same  
 To all their children; common in their care,  
 And in their love of 'em—I am unhappy,  
 For loving one too well.

*Vil.* You knew your brother liv'd; why did you take  
 Such pains to marry me to Isabella?

*Car.* I had my reasons for't——

*Vil.* More than I thought you had.

*Car.* But one was this——

I knew my brother lov'd his wife so well,  
 That if he ever should come home again,  
 He could not long outlive the loss of her.

*Bel.* If you rely'd on that, why did you kill him?

*Car.* To make all sure. Now, you are answer'd all.  
 Where must I go? I am tired of your questions.

*C. Bald.* I leave the judge to tell thee what thou art;  
 A father cannot find a name for thee.  
 But parricide is highest treason, sure,  
 To sacred nature's law; and must be so,  
 So sentenc'd in thy crimes. Take him away—  
 The violent remedy is found at last,  
 That drives thee out, thou poison of my blood,  
 Infected long, and only foul in thee. [*Carlos led off.*  
 Grant me, sweet Heav'n! the patience to go thro'  
 The torment of my cure.—Here, here begins  
 The operation—Alas! she's mad.

*Enter ISABELLA distracted, held by her Women; her  
 Hair dishevell'd; her little Son running in before,  
 being afraid of her.*

*Vil.* My Isabella! poor unhappy wretch!  
 What can I say to her?



*Isa.* Nothing, nothing; 'tis a babbling world——  
I'll hear no more on't. When does the court sit?  
“ I'll not be bought—What! to sell innocent blood!”  
You look like one of the pale judges here;  
Minos, or Rhadamanth, or Æacus—  
I have heard of you.

I have a cause to try, an honest one;  
Will you not hear it? Then I must appeal  
To the bright throne—Call down the heav'nly powers  
To witness how you use me.

“ *Wom.* Help, help, we cannot hold her.

“ *Vil.* You but enrage her more.”

*C. Bald.* Pray, give her way; she'll hurt nobody.

*Isa.* What have you done with him? He was here  
but now;

I saw him here. Oh, Biron, Biron! where,  
Where have they hid thee from me? He is gone—  
But here's a little flaming cherubim——

*Child.* Oh, save me, save me! [*Running to Bald.*

*Isa.* The Mercury of Heav'n, with silver wings,  
Impt for the flight, to overtake his ghost,  
And bring him back again.

*Child.* I fear she'll kill me.

*C. Bald.* She will not hurt thee. [*She flings away.*

*Isa.* Will nothing do? I did not hope to find  
Justice on earth; 'tis not in Heav'n neither.

Biron has watch'd his opportunity——

Softly; he steals it from the sleeping gods,  
And sends it thus—— [*Stabs herself.*  
Now, now I laugh at you, defy you all,  
You tyrant murderers.

*Vil.* Call, call for help——Oh, Heav'n this was  
too much.

*C. Bald.* Oh, thou most injur'd innocence! Yet live,  
Live but to witness for me to the world,  
How much I do repent me of the wrongs,  
Th' unnatural wrongs which I have heap'd on thee,  
And have pull'd down this judgment on us all.

*Vil.* Oh, speak, speak but a word of comfort to her!

*C. Bald.* If the most tender father's care and love

Of thee and thy poor child, can make amends—  
Oh, yet look up and live!

*Isa.* Where is that little wretch? [*They raise her.*  
I die in peace to leave him to your care.

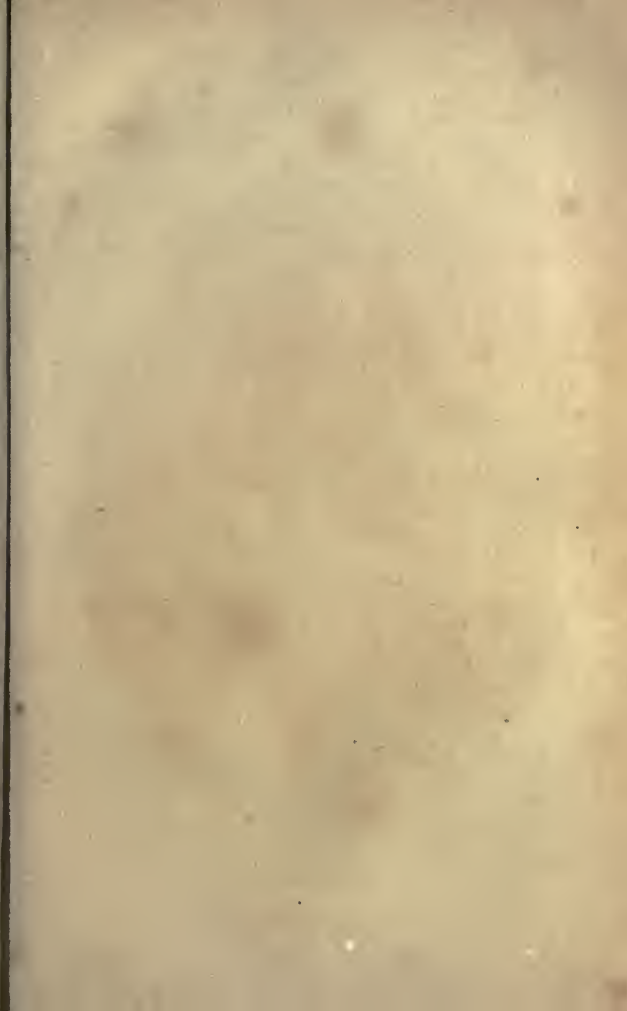
I have a wretched mother's legacy,  
A dying kiss—pray let me give it him,  
My blessing; that, that's all I have to leave thee.  
Oh, may thy father's virtues live in thee,  
And all his wrongs be buried in my grave! [*Dies.*

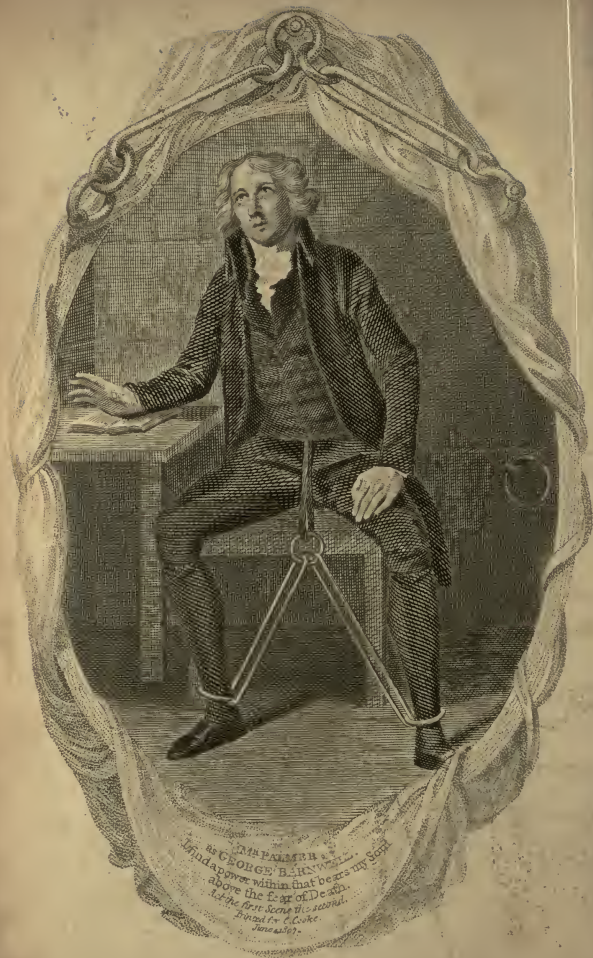
*Vil.* She's gone, and all my joys of life with her.  
“Where are your officers of justice now?  
“Seize, bind me, drag me to the bloody bar.  
“Accuse, condemn me; let the sentence reach  
“My hated life—No matter how it comes;  
“I'll think it just, and thank you as it falls.  
“Self-murder is deny'd me; else how soon  
“Could I be past the pain of my remembrance!  
“But I must live, grow grey with ling'ring grief,  
“To die at last in telling this sad tale.”

*C. Bald.* Poor wretched orphan of most wretched  
parents!  
“Scaping the storm, thou'rt thrown upon a rock,  
“To perish there.” The very rocks would melt,  
Soften their nature, sure, to foster thee;  
I find it by myself: my flinty heart,  
That barren rock, on which thy father starv'd,  
Opens its springs of nourishment to thee.  
There's not a vein but shall run milk for thee.  
Oh, had I pardon'd my poor Biron's fault,  
His first, his only fault—this had not been!

*To erring youth there's some compassion due;  
But while with rigour you their crimes pursue,  
What's their misfortune is a crime for you.  
Hence, learn offending children to forgive:  
Leave punishment to Heav'n—'tis Heav'n's prerogative.*

THE END.





MR PALMER  
as GEORGE BARNWELL  
And a power within that bears my Soul  
above the fear of Death.  
Act the first Scene the second.  
Printed by C. Cooke.  
June 1817.

TRAGEDY  
OF  
GEORGE BARNWELL:

BY GEORGE LILLO.

ADAPTED FOR THEATRICAL REPRESENTATION,

*As performed at the Théâtres-Royal,*  
COVENT-GARDEN AND DRURY-LANE.

Regulated from the Prompt Books,

BY PERMISSION OF THE MANAGERS.

WITH A CRITIQUE,

And the

*LIFE OF THE AUTHOR;*

The Lines distinguished by inverted Commas, are omitted  
in the Representation.

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Cooke's Edition.

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SUPERBLY EMBELLISHED.

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London:

Printed for C. COOKE, Paternoster-Row,  
by R. M'Donald, Green Arbour Court, and  
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United Kingdom.

THE HISTORY OF THE  
CITY OF LONDON

FROM THE FOUNDATION OF THE CITY  
TO THE PRESENT TIME

BY SAMUEL JOHNSON

IN TWO VOLUMES

LONDON: Printed by J. JOHNSON, in Pall-mall.

MDCCLXXXIII.

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TO

*SIR JOHN EYLES, BART.*

SIR,

IF tragic poetry be, as Mr. Dryden has observed, the most excellent and useful kind of writing, the more extensively useful the moral of any tragedy is, the more excellent that piece must be of its kind.

I hope I shall not be thought to insinuate, that this, to which I have presumed to prefix your name, is such: that depends on its fitness to answer the end of tragedy, the exciting the passions, in order to correct such of them as are criminal, either in their nature, or through their excess. Whether the following scenes do this in any degree, is, with the deference that becomes one who would not be thought vain, submitted to your candour and impartial judgment.

What I would infer is this: that tragedy is so far from losing its dignity by being accommodated to the circumstances of the generality of mankind, that it is more truly august in proportion to the extent of its influence, and the numbers that are properly affected by it; as it is more truly great to be the instrument of good to many who stand in need of our assistance, than to a very small part of that number.

If princes, &c. were alone liable to misfortunes arising from vice or weakness in themselves or others, there would be good reason for confining the characters in tragedy to those of superior rank: but since the contrary is evident, nothing can be more reasonable than to proportion the remedy to the disease.

I am far from denying that tragedies founded on any instructive and extraordinary events in history, or well-invented fables, where the persons introduced are of the highest rank, are without their use. The strong contrast between a Tamerlane and a Bajazet may have its weight with an unsteady people, and contribute to the fixing of them in the interest of a prince of the character of the former; when, through their own levity, or the arts of designing men, they are ren-

dered factious and uneasy, though they have the highest reason to be satisfied. The sentiments and example of a Cato may inspire his spectators with a just sense of the value of liberty, when they see that honest patriot prefer death to an obligation from a tyrant, who would sacrifice the constitution of his country, and the liberties of mankind, to his ambition or revenge. I have attempted, indeed, to enlarge the province of the graver kind of poetry, and should be glad to see it carried on by some abler hand. Plays founded on moral tales in private life may be of admirable use, by carrying conviction to the mind with such irresistible force as to engage all the faculties and powers of the soul in the cause of virtue, by stifling vice in its first principles. They who imagine this to be too much to be attributed to tragedy, must be strangers to the energy of that noble species of poetry. Shakspeare, who has given such amazing proofs of his genius, in that as well as in comedy, in his *Hamlet* has the following lines :

“ Had he the motive and the cause for passion  
 “ That I have, he would drown the stage with tears,  
 “ And cleave the general ear with horrid speech:  
 “ Make mad the guilty, and appall the free,  
 “ Confound the ignorant, and amaze indeed  
 “ The very faculty of eyes and ears.”

And farther, in the same speech :

“ I’ve heard that guilty creatures at a play  
 “ Have, by the very cunning of the scene,  
 “ Been so struck to the soul, that presently  
 “ They have proclaim’d their malefactions.”

Prodigious ! yet strictly just. But I shall not take up your valuable time with my remarks : only give me leave just to observe, that he seems so firmly persuaded of the power of a well-written piece to produce the effect here ascribed to it, as to make Hamlet venture his soul on the event, and rather trust that than a messenger from the other world, though it assumed, as he expresses it, his “ noble father’s form,” and as-

sured him, that it was his spirit. “ I’ll have,” says Hamlet, “ grounds more relative ;”

“ —the play’s the thing,

“ Wherein I’ll catch the conscience of the king.”

Such plays are the best answers to them who deny the usefulness of the stage.

Considering the novelty of this attempt, I thought it would be expected from me to say something in its excuse ; and I was unwilling to lose the opportunity of saying something of the use of tragedy in general, and what may be reasonably expected from the farther improvement of this excellent kind of poetry.

SIR,

I hope you will not think I have said too much of an art, a mean specimen of which I am ambitious to recommend to your favour and protection. A mind, conscious of superior worth, as much despises flattery, as it is above it. Had I an inclination to so contemptible a vice, I should not have chosen Sir JOHN EYLES for my patron. And the best written panegyric, though strictly true, must place you in a light much inferior to that in which you have long been fixed by the love and esteem of your fellow-citizens, whose choice of you for one of their representatives in parliament, has sufficiently declared their sense of your merit. Nor hath the knowledge of your worth been confined to the city: the proprietors in the South-Sea Company gave the greatest proof of their confidence in your capacity and probity, by choosing you Sub-Governor of their Company, at a time when their affairs were in the utmost confusion, and their properties in the greatest danger. Neither is the court insensible of your importance. I shall not, therefore, attempt to delineate a character so well known, nor pretend to add any thing to a reputation so well established.

I am, Sir,

Your most obedient, humble servant,

GEORGE LILLO.

## LIFE OF GEORGE LILLO.

GEORGE LILLO was by profession a jeweller. He was born in the neighbourhood of Moorgate, in London, on the 4th of Feb. 1693 ; in which neighbourhood he pursued his occupation for many years with the fairest and most unblemished character. He was bred up in the principles of the Protestant Dissenters. He was strongly attached to the Muses : yet he laid it down as a maxim, that the devotion paid to them ought always to tend to the promotion of virtue, morality, and religion. In pursuance of this object, Mr. Lillo was happy in the choice of his subjects, and shewed great power of affecting the heart, by working up the passions to such a height, as to render the distresses of common and domestic life equally interesting to the audiences as that of kings and heroes. His *George Barnwell*, *Fatal Curiosity*, and *Arden of Feversham*, are all plauned on common and well-known stories ; yet they have more frequently drawn tears from the audience, than the more pompous tragedies of *Alexander the Great*, *All for Love*, &c. particularly the first of them, which being founded on a well-known old ballad, many of the critics of that time, who went to the first representation of it, formed so contemptible an idea of the piece in their expectations, that they purchased the ballad, in order to draw comparisons between that and the play. But the merit of the play soon got the better of this contempt, and presented them with scenes written truly to the heart.

Mr. Lillo has been happy in the choice of his subjects ; his conduct in the management of them is no less meritorious, and his *pathos* very great. The greatest objection to his writings is, that sometimes he affects an elevation of style somewhat above the simplicity of his subject, and the supposed rank of his characters ; but the custom of tragedy will stand in some degree of excuse for this ; and a still better argument perhaps may be admitted in vindication, not only of our present author, but of other writers in the

like predicament, which is, that Nature itself will justify this conduct, since we find the most humble characters in real life, when under peculiar circumstances of distress, or actuated by the influence of any violent passions, will at times be elevated to an aptness of expression and power of language, not only greatly superior to themselves, but even to the general language of conversation of persons of much higher rank in life, and of minds more perfectly cultivated.

In the Prologue to *Elmerick*, which was not, acted until after the author's death, it is said that when he wrote that play he was depressed by want, and afflicted by disease; but in the former particular there appears to be evidently a mistake, as he died possessed of an estate of 60*l. per annum*, besides other effects to a considerable value. The late editor of his works (Mr. Davies) in two volumes, 12mo. 1775, relates the following story of his author, which, however, we cannot think adapted to convey any favourable impression of the person of whom it is told: "Towards the latter part of his life, Mr. Lillo, whether from judgment or humour, determined to put the sincerity of his friends, who professed a very high regard for him, to a trial. In order to carry on this design, he put in practice an odd kind of stratagem: he asked one of his intimate acquaintance to lend him a considerable sum of money, and for this he declared he would give no bond, nor any other security, except a note of hand; the person to whom he applied, not liking the terms, civilly refused him.

"Soon after, Lillo met his nephew, Mr. Underwood, with whom he had been at variance for some time. He put the same question to him, desiring him to lend him money upon the same terms. His nephew, either from a sagacious apprehension of his uncle's real intention, or from generosity of spirit, immediately offered to comply with his request. Lillo was so well pleased with this ready compliance of Mr. Underwood, that he immediately declared that he was



fully satisfied with the love and regard that his nephew bore him; he was convinced that his friendship was entirely disinterested, and assured him that he should reap the benefit such generous behaviour deserved. In consequence of this promise, he bequeathed him the bulk of his fortune."

The same writer says, that Lillo in his person was lusty, but not tall, and of a pleasing aspect, though unhappily deprived of the sight of one eye.

Our author died Sept. 3, 1739, in the 47th year of his age; and a few months after his death, Henry Fielding printed the following character of him in *The Champion*: "He had a perfect knowledge of human nature, though his contempt of all base means of application, which are the necessary steps to great acquaintance, restrained his conversation within very narrow bounds. He had the spirit of an old Roman, joined to the innocence of a primitive Christian; he was content with his little state of life, in which his excellent temper of mind gave him an happiness beyond the power of riches. In short, he was one of the best of men, and those who knew him best will most regret his loss."

His dramatic pieces are as follow :

1. *Sylvia*; or, *The Country Burial*. An Opera. 8vo. 1730.
2. *The London Merchant*; or, *The History of George Barnwell*. A Tragedy. 8vo. 1731.
3. *The Christian Hero*. A Tragedy. 8vo. [1734.]
4. *The Fatal Curiosity*. A Tragedy. 8vo. 1737.
5. *Maring*. A Play. 8vo. 1738.
6. *Britannia and Batavia*. A Masque. 8vo. 1740.
7. *Elmerick*; or, *Justice Triumphant*. A Tragedy. 8vo. 1740.
8. *Arden of Feversham*. A Farce. 12mo. 1762.
9. *The Regulators*.

THE EDITOR.



# CRITIQUE

ON

GEORGE BARNWELL.

I ADDRESS myself to the review of this simple and affecting drama, with a degree of gratification that has not always attended my labours in the progress of this onerous and miscellaneous undertaking.

I esteem George Lillo's character very highly for his good meaning, and I have a due respect for his talents, of which I conceive the best specimens are to be found in his *Fatal Curiosity*; for his prose is, in my opinion, very heavy and inharmonious. The ambition which has prompted some of our dramatic writers to strike out of the common road of composition into new paths and new experiments, has very generally led them to take leave of Nature, and dash into the *inane* of fancy and romance. Groups of imaginary beings, numberless feats exceeding human powers, and incidents that mock all human possibility, have been hatched in the heated pericraniums of our dramatists and novelists, who either falsely conceived that Nature was exhausted, (when, in fact, the only void was in themselves;) or, calculating upon success, imagined it was easier to obtain it by surprising fictions than by pleasing probabilities. To them it most likely appeared the readier avenue; and it must be owned there is temptation enough to pursue it, when we contemplate the lamentable frivolity of the prevailing taste. If what is called the public have no better skill in the commodity they purchase, than the simple savage who takes brass buttons and

old iron in barter for the necessaries of life, who will say the traffic is not favourable to the adventurer? There will be no dearth of dealers whilst there is such an abundant overflow of dupes, to take their despicable manufactures off their hands.

The very opposite to this was the ambition that influenced this moral author, when he essayed to make Tragedy dismount from her stilts, and walk the streets of London unbuskined into compting-houses, visit the cells of Newgate, keep company with common prostitutes, and condescend to be hanged at Tyburn, for the edification of the idle apprentices. Surely there was as much ambition in the breast of this author, as in that of any monster-monger of the modern time; only this was ambition of a laudable sort, and that was the ambition of a mountebank who pretends to draw your teeth with the point of his sword.

Lillo boldly and openly presents us with a murder, and atones to justice by hanging his hero for committing it; our present dramatic terrorists sneakily give us a murder at second hand, and scare all our children and their nurses with ghosts and hobgoblins, for which they themselves ought to be hanged. He aims to establish an honest reputation by the tear which he elicits, and the moral he instils; they endeavour first to frighten us out of our senses, and then run away with our applause in the moments of our fatuity. Much good may it do them! Let me rather go into the prison with Lillo, than into the playhouse with them. When will this nation wake to reason, and get rid of these phantasmas?

I am not informed how this play was received by its first audiences ; for I only concern myself with the work itself, and do not extend my enquiries about the maker of it : I think it must have been a hardy attempt ; for it was trusting to the good sense of his spectators. We act it about once in a season, with much the same relish as we eat salt-fish upon Good Friday ; and who can be a greater object of pity than the poor unhappy Millwood of the night ? I can hardly suppose there is a writer now living, who has fortitude enough to attempt such a play, or interest to get it acted if he had written it. Jonas Hanway had moral zeal enough for the undertaking, but his genius did not carry him quite so high up as to the apprentices ; he got no further in the stages of the community than to the chimney-sweepers : and he, good man, is no more. He warned us against drinking tea, and shooting London-bridge ; but he did not live to dissuade us from shooting our uncles, and drinking wine with bad women. He had a great turn for poetry ; for he furnished his drawing-room superbly with festoons of gilded carved work, inscribed with verses : but, alas ! they were verses of other people's making ; and my friend had only the gift of benevolent ingredients, but not the art of making them palatable by the ingenuity of the vehicle. A George Barnwell of his writing would never have lived to be hanged.

Congreve, and Farquhar, and Southern, and a host of ingenious anti-moralists, have contrived a *quantum sufficit* of villainy, but they never spare any of it to apprentices ; they bestow it all upon fine gentlemen

and fine ladies; and the only punishment they ever receive from their authors is, when they marry them to each other at the end of the play. They never interrupt their enjoyment by the mention of the gallows amongst the personages of the drama; though they take due pains to send as many of their hearers there, as blasphemy, lasciviousness, brutality, and adultery, daringly exhibited, can corrupt.

There may be faults in this play of *George Barnwell* (for no play can be without them), but I will not point them out, nor be the critic of an author, who loved mankind so much better than he loved praise, that he let kings and queens pass off unincensed by his Muse, whilst he dealt instruction to apprentices and prostitutes from the condemned hole of a prison, and erected his gibbet on the pinnacle of Parnassus, as a finger-post to Melpomene, to point out the road she has since too often taken, and a warning to Apollo of the fate which too many of his votaries have deserved.

I wish I could, consistently with my duty, dismiss all my succeeding authors, with a review as amicable towards them, and as agreeable to myself, as this, which I now conclude.



## PROLOGUE.

*THE Tragic Muse, sublime, delights to shew,  
Princes distress'd, and scenes of royal woe ;  
In awful pomp, majestic, to relate  
The fall of nations, or some hero's fate ;  
That scepter'd chiefs may, by example, know  
The strange vicissitudes of things below ;  
What dangers on security attend ;  
How pride and cruelty in ruin end :  
Hence Providence supreme to know, and own  
Humanity adds glory to a throne.  
In every former age, and foreign tongue,  
With native grandeur thus the goddess sung.  
Upon our stage, indeed, with wish'd success,  
You've sometimes seen her in an humbler dress ;  
Great only in distress, when she complains  
In Southern's, Rowe's, or Otway's moving strains,  
The brilliant drops that fall from each bright eye,  
The absent pomp with brighter gems supply.  
Forgive us, then, if we attempt to shew,  
In artless strains, a tale of private woe.  
A London 'prentice ruin'd is our theme,  
Drawn from the fam'd old song that bears his name.  
We hope your taste is not so high to scorn  
A moral tale esteem'd ere you were born ;  
Which, for a century of rolling years,  
Has fill'd a thousand thousand eyes with tears.  
If thoughtless youth to warn, and shame the age  
From vice destructive, well becomes the stage ;  
If this example innocence insure,  
Prevent our guilt, or by reflection cure,  
If Millwood's dreadful crimes, and sad despair,  
Commend the virtue of the good and fair ;  
Tho' art be wanting, and our numbers fail,  
Indulge th' attempt, in justice to the tale.*

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

*Men.*

THOROWGOOD.

BARNWELL, *Uncle to George.*

GEORGE BARNWELL.

TRUEMAN.

BLUNT.

Gaoler.

*Women.*

MARIA.

MILLWOOD.

LUCY.

*Officers with their Attendants, and Footmen.*

*Scene, LONDON, and an adjacent Village.*



# GEORGE BARNWELL.

## ACT I. SCENE I.

*A Room in THOROWGOOD's House. Enter  
THOROWGOOD and TRUEMAN.*

*Trueman.* SIR, the packet from Genoa is arrived.  
[*Gives letters.*]

*Thor.* Heaven be prais'd! The storm that threatened our royal mistress, pure religion, liberty, and laws, is for a time diverted. The haughty and revengeful Spaniard, disappointed of the loan on which he depended from Genoa, must now attend the slow returns of wealth from his new world, to supply his empty coffers, ere he can execute his proposed invasion of our happy island. By this means, time is gained to make such preparations on our part, as may, Heaven concurring, prevent his malice, or turn the meditated mischief on himself.

*True.* He must be insensible indeed, who is not affected when the safety of his country is concerned. Sir, may I know by what means?—If I am not too bold—

*Thor.* Your curiosity is laudable; and I gratify it with the greater pleasure, because from thence you may learn, how honest merchants, as such, may sometimes contribute to the safety of their country, as they do at all times to its happiness; that if hereafter you should be tempted to any action that has the appearance of vice or meanness in it, upon reflecting on the dignity of our profession, you may, with honest scorn, reject whatever is unworthy of it.

*True.* Should Barnwell, or I, who have the benefit of your example, by our ill conduct bring any imputation on that honourable name, we must be left without excuse.

*Thor.* You compliment, young man. [*Trueman bows respectfully.*] Nay, I am not offended. As the name of merchant never degrades the gentleman, so by no means does it exclude him; only take heed not

to purchase the character of complaisant at the expence of your sincerity.—But to answer your question: The bank of Genoa had agreed, at an excessive interest, and on good security, to advance the King of Spain a sum of money sufficient to equip his vast Armada; of which our peerless Elizabeth (more than in name the mother of her people) being well informed, sent Walsingham, her wise and faithful secretary, to consult the merchants of this loyal city; who all agreed to direct their several agents to influence, if possible, the Genoese to break their contract with the Spanish court. 'Tis done: the state and bank of Genoa having maturely weighed, and rightly judged of their true interest, prefer the friendship of the merchants of London to that of the monarch, who proudly stiles himself king of both Indies.

*True.* Happy success of prudent counsels! What an expence of blood and treasure is here saved! “Excellent queen! O how unlike those princes, who make the danger of foreign enemies a pretence to oppress their subjects by taxes great, and grievous to be borne!

“*Thor.* Not so our gracious queen; whose richest exchequer is her people’s love, as their happiness her greatest glory.

“*True.* On these terms to defend us, is to make our protection a benefit worthy her who confers it, and well worth our acceptance.” Sir, have you any commands for me at this time?

*Thor.* Only look carefully over the files, to see whether there are any tradesmen’s bills unpaid; if there are, send and discharge ’em. We must not let artificers lose their time, so useful to the public and their families, in unnecessary attendance. [*Exit Trueman.*

*Enter MARIA.*

Well, Maria, have you given orders for the entertainment? I would have it in some measure worthy the guests. Let there be plenty, and of the best, that the courtiers may at least commend our hospitality.

*Mar.* Sir, I have endeavoured not to wrong your well-known generosity by an ill-timed parsimony.

*Thor.* Nay, 'twas a needless caution: I have no cause to doubt your prudence.

*Mar.* Sir, I find myself unfit for conversation; I should but increase the number of the company, without adding to their satisfaction.

*Thor.* Nay, my child, this melancholy must not be indulged.

*Mar.* Company will but increase it: I wish you would dispense with my absence. Solitude best suits my present temper,

*Thor.* You are not insensible, that it is chiefly on your account these noble lords do me the honour so frequently to grace my board. Should you be absent, the disappointment may make them repent of their condescension, and think their labour lost.

*Mar.* He that shall think his time or honour lost in visiting you, can set no real value on your daughter's company, whose only merit is, that she is yours. The man of quality who chooses to converse with a gentleman and merchant of your worth and character, may confer honour by so doing, but he loses none.

*Thor.* Come, come, Maria, I need not tell you, that a young gentleman may prefer your conversation to mine, and yet intend me no disrespect at all; for though he may lose no honour in my company, 'tis very natural for him to expect more pleasure in yours. I remember the time when the company of the greatest and wisest men in the kingdom would have been insipid and tiresome to me, if it had deprived me of an opportunity of enjoying your mother's.

*Mar.* Yours, no doubt, was as agreeable to her; for generous minds know no pleasure in society but where 'tis mutual.

*Thor.* Thou knowest I have no heir, no child, but thee; the fruits of many years successful industry must all be thine. Now it would give me pleasure, great as my love, to see on whom you will bestow it. I am daily solicited by men of the greatest rank and merit

for leave to address you: but I have hitherto declined it, in hopes that, by observation, I should learn which way your inclination tends; for, as I know love to be essential to happiness in the married state, I had rather my approbation should confirm your choice than direct it.

*Mar.* What can I say? How shall I answer, as I ought, this tenderness, so uncommon even in the best of parents? But you are without example: yet, had you been less indulgent, I had been most wretched. That I look on the crowd of courtiers that visit here, with equal esteem, but equal indifference, you have observed, and I must needs confess; yet, had you asserted your authority, and insisted on a parent's right to be obey'd, I had submitted, and to my duty sacrificed my peace.

*Thor.* From your perfect obedience in every other instance, I feared as much; and therefore would leave you without a bias in an affair wherein your happiness is so immediately concerned.

*Mar.* Whether from a want of that just ambition that would become your daughter, or from some other cause, I know not; but I find high birth and titles don't recommend the man who owns them, to my affections.

*Thor.* I would not that they should, unless his merit recommends him more. A noble birth and fortune, though they make not a bad man good, yet they are a real advantage to a worthy one, and place his virtues in the fairest light.

*Mar.* I cannot answer for my inclinations; but they shall ever be submitted to your wisdom and authority. And as you will not compel me to marry where I cannot love, love shall never make me act contrary to my duty. Sir, have I your permission to retire?

*Thor.* I'll see you to your chamber. [*Exeunt.*]

#### SCENE II.

*A Room in MILLWOOD's House. Enter MILLWOOD and LUCY.*

*Mill.* How do I look to-day, Lucy?

*Lucy.* Oh, killingly, madam! A little more red, and you'll be irresistible.—But why this more than ordinary care of your dress and complexion? What new conquest are you aiming at?

*Mill.* A conquest would be new indeed.

*Lucy.* Not to you, who make 'em every day—but to me—Well, 'tis what I'm never to expect—unfortunate as I am—But your wit and beauty—

*Mill.* First made me a wretch, and still continue me so. Men, however generous or sincere to one another, are all selfish hypocrites in their affairs with us; we are no otherwise esteemed or regarded by them, but as we contribute to their satisfaction.

*Lucy.* You are certainly, madam, on the wrong side in this argument. Is not the expence all theirs? And I am sure it is our own fault if we have not our share of the pleasure.

*Mill.* We are but slaves to men.

*Lucy.* Nay, 'tis they that are slaves most certainly, for we lay them under contribution.

*Mill.* Slaves have no property; no, not even in themselves: all is the victor's.

*Lucy.* You are strangely arbitrary in your principles, madam.

*Mill.* I would have my conquest complete, like those of the Spaniards in the New World; who first plundered the natives of all the wealth they had, and then condemned the wretches to the mines for life, to work for more.

*Lucy.* Well, I shall never approve of your scheme of government: I should think it much more politic, as well as just, to find my subjects an easier employment.

*Mill.* It is a general maxim among the knowing part of mankind, that a woman without virtue, like a man without honour or honesty, is capable of any action, though never so vile: and yet what pains will they not take, what arts not use, to seduce us from our innocence, and make us contemptible and wicked, even in their own opinion? Then is it not just, the



villains, to their cost, should find us so? But guilt makes them suspicious, and keeps them on their guard; therefore we can take advantage only of the young and innocent part of the sex, who having never injured women, apprehend no injury from them.

*Lucy.* Ay, they must be young indeed.

*Mill.* Such a one, I think, I have found. As I have passed through the city, I have often observed him receiving and paying considerable sums of money; from thence I conclude he is employed in affairs of consequence.

*Lucy.* Is he handsome?

*Mill.* Ay, ay, the stripling is well made, and has a good face.

*Lucy.* About——

*Mill.* Eighteen.

*Lucy.* Innocent, handsome, and about eighteen!—You'll be vastly happy. Why, if you manage well, you may keep him to yourself these two or three years.

*Mill.* If I manage well, I shall have done with him much sooner. Having long had a design on him, and meeting him yesterday, I made a full stop, and gazing wishfully in his face, ask'd his name. He blush'd and bowing very low, answer'd, George Barnwell. I begged his pardon for the freedom I had taken, and told him, that he was the person I had long wished to see, and to whom I had an affair of importance to communicate at a proper time and place. He named a tavern; I talked of honour and reputation, and invited him to my house. He swallowed the bait, promised to come, and this is the time I expect him. [*Knocking at the door.*] Somebody knocks——D'ye hear; I am at home to nobody to-day but him. [*Exit Lucy.*] Less affairs must give way to those of more consequence; and I am strangely mistaken if this does not prove of great importance to me, and him too, before I have done with him. Now, after what manner shall I receive him? Let me consider——What manner of person am I to receive? He is young, innocent, and bashful; therefore I must take



care not to put him out of countenance at first. "But  
" then, if I have any skill in physiognomy, he is  
" amorous; and, with a little assistance, will soon  
" get the better of his modesty." I'll e'en trust to  
nature, who does wonders in these matters. "If to  
" seem what one is not, in order to be the better  
" liked for what one really is; if to speak one thing,  
" and mean the direct contrary, be art in a woman—  
" I know nothing of nature."

*Enter BARNWELL, bowing very low. LUCY at a distance.*

*Mill.* Sir, the surprise and joy—

*Barn.* Madam!

*Mill.* This is such a favour— [Advancing.

*Barn.* Pardon me, Madam.

*Mill.* So unhop'd for! [Still advances.

[Barnwell salutes her, and retires in confusion

To see you here—Excuse the confusion—

*Barn.* I fear I am too bold—

*Mill.* Alas, sir, I may justly apprehend you think me so. Please, sir, to sit. I am as much at a loss how to receive this honour as I ought, as I am surprised at your goodness in conferring it.

*Barn.* I thought you had expected me: I promised to come.

*Mill.* That is the more surprising; few men are such religious observers of their word.

*Barn.* All who are honest are.

*Mill.* To one another; but we simple women are seldom thought of consequence enough to gain a place in their remembrance.

[Laying her hand on his, as by accident.

*Barn.* Her disorder is so great, she don't perceive she has laid her hand on mine. Heav'ns! How she trembles!—What can this mean? [Aside.

*Mill.* The interest I have in all that relates to you, (the reason of which you shall know hereafter) excites my curiosity; and were I sure you would pardon my presumption, I should desire to know your real sentiments on a very particular subject.

*Barn.* Madam, you may command my poor thoughts on any subject, I have none that I would conceal.

*Mill.* You'll think me bold.

*Barn.* No, indeed.

*Mill.* What then are your thoughts of love?

*Barn.* If you mean the love of women, I have not thought of it. My youth and circumstances make such thoughts improper. But if you mean the general love we owe mankind, I think no one has more of it than myself. I don't know a person in the world, whose happiness I don't wish, and would not promote, were it in my power. In an especial manner I love my uncle, and my master; but above all, my friend.

*Mill.* You have a friend, then, whom you love?

*Barn.* As he does me, sincerely.

*Mill.* He is, no doubt, often bless'd with your company and conversation?

*Barn.* We live in one house, and both serve the same worthy merchant.

*Mill.* Happy, happy youth! Whoe'er thou art, I envy thee, "and so must all, who see and know this " youth." What have I lost, by being form'd a woman! I hate my sex. Had I been a man, I might, perhaps, have been as happy in your friendship, as he who now enjoys it is: but as it is:—Oh!—

*Barn.* I never observed woman before; or this is, sure, the most beautiful of her sex. [*Aside.*] You seem disordered, madam—May I know the cause?

*Mill.* Do not ask me—I can never speak it, whatever is the cause. I wish for things impossible. I would be a servant, bound to the same master, to live in one house with you.

*Barn.* How strange, and yet how kind, her words and actions are! And the effect they have on me is as strange. I feel desires I never knew before. I must be gone, while I have power to go. [*Aside.*] Madam, I humbly take my leave.

*Mill.* You will not, sure, leave me so soon!

*Barn.* Indeed I must.

*Mill.* You cannot be so cruel! I have prepared a poor supper, at which I promised myself your company.

*Barn.* I am sorry I must refuse the honour you designed me; but my duty to my master calls me hence. I never yet neglected his service. He is so gentle, and so good a master, that should I wrong him, though he might forgive me, I should never forgive myself.

*Mill.* Am I refused, by the first man, the second favour I ever stooped to ask? Go then, thou proud hard-hearted youth; but know, you are the only man that could be found, who would let me sue twice for greater favours.

*Barn.* What shall I do? How shall I go, or stay?

*Mill.* Yet do not, do not leave me. I with my sex's pride would meet your scorn; but when I look upon you, when I behold these eyes—Oh! spare my tongue, and let my blushes—this flood of tears too, that will force its way, declare—what woman's modesty should hide.

*Barn.* Oh, Heavens! she loves me, worthless as I am. Her looks, her words, her flowing tears confess it. And can I leave her then? Oh, never, never! Madam, dry up your tears: you shall command me; I will stay here for ever, if you would have me.

*Lucy.* So: she has wheedled him out of his virtue of obedience already, and will strip him of all the rest, one after another, till she has left him as few as her ladyship, or myself.

*Mill.* Now you are kind, indeed: but I mean not to detain you always: I would have you shake off all slavish obedience to your master; but you may serve him still.

*Lucy.* Serve him still! Ay, or he'll have no opportunity of fingering his cash; and then he'll not serve your end, I'll be sworn. [Aside.]

*Enter BLUNT.*

*Blunt.* Madam, supper's on the table.

*Mill.* Come, sir, you'll excuse all defects. My

thoughts were too much employed on my guest to observe the entertainment.

[*Exeunt Barnwell and Millwood.*]

*Blunt.* What! is all this preparation, this elegant supper, variety of wines, and music, for the entertainment of that young fellow?

*Lucy.* So it seems.

*Blunt.* How! is our mistress turned fool at last? She's in love with him, I suppose.

*Lucy.* I suppose not. But she designs to make him in love with her, if she can.

*Blunt.* What will she get by that? He seems under age, and can't be supposed to have much money.

*Lucy.* But his master has, and that's the same thing, as she'll manage it.

*Blunt.* I don't like this fooling with a handsome young fellow: while she's endeavouring to ensnare him, she may be caught herself.

*Lucy.* Nay, were she like me, that would certainly be the consequence; for, I confess, there is something in youth and innocence that moves me mightily.

*Blunt.* Yes; so does the smoothness and plumpness of a partridge move a mighty desire in the hawk to be the destruction of it.

*Lucy.* Why, birds are their prey, and men are ours; though, as you observed, we are sometimes caught ourselves. But that, I dare say, will never be the case of our mistress.

*Blunt.* I wish it may prove so; for you know we all depend upon her. Should she trifle away her time with a young fellow that there's nothing to be got by, we must all starve.

*Lucy.* There's no danger of that; for I am sure she has no view in this affair but interest.

*Blunt.* Well, and what hopes are there of success in that?

*Lucy.* The most promising that can be. 'Tis true the youth has his scruples; but she'll soon teach him to answer them, by stifling his conscience. Oh, the lad is in a hopeful way, depend upon't. [*Exeunt.*]

## SCENE III.

*Draws, and discovers BARNWELL and MILLWOOD at Supper. An Entertainment of Music and Singing. After which they come forward.*

*Barn.* WHAT can I answer? All that I know is, you are fair, and I am miserable.

*Mill.* We are both so, and yet the fault is in ourselves.

*Barn.* To ease our present anguish by plunging into guilt, is to buy a moment's pleasure with an age of pain.

*Mill.* I should have thought the joys of love as lasting as they are great: if ours prove otherwise, 'tis your inconstancy must make them so.

*Barn.* The law of Heaven will not be reversed, and that requires us to govern our passions.

*Mill.* To give us sense of beauty and desires, and yet forbid us to taste and be happy, is a cruelty to nature. Have we passions only to torment us?

*Barn.* To hear you talk, though in the cause of vice; to gaze upon your beauty, press your hand, "and see your snow-white bosom heave and fall," inflames my wishes; my pulse beats high, "my senses all are in a hurry," and I am on the rack of wild desire.—Yet, for a moment's guilty pleasure shall I lose my innocence, my peace of mind, and hopes of solid happiness?

*Mill.* Chimeras all!

*Barn.* I would not——yet must on——

*" Reluctant thus the merchant quits his ease,*

*" And trusts to rocks and sands, and stormy seas;*

*" In hopes some unknown golden coast to find,*

*" Commits himself though doubtful to the wind,*

*" Longs much for joys to come—yet mourns those  
" left behind."*

*Mill.* Along with me, and prove

*No joys like woman-kind, no heaven like love.*

*[Exeunt.]*



## ACT II. SCENE II.

THOROWGOOD's House. Enter BARNWELL.

*Barnwell.* How strange are all things round me! Like some thief who treads forbidden ground, and fain would lurk unseen, fearful I enter each apartment of this well-known house. To guilty love, as if that were too little, already have I added breach of trust—A thief!—Can I know myself that wretched thing, and look my honest friend and injured master in the face? Though hypocrisy may a while conceal my guilt, at length it will be known, and public shame and ruin must ensue. In the mean time, what must be my life? Ever to speak a language foreign to my heart; hourly to add to the number of my crimes, in order to conceal 'em. Sure such was the condition of the grand apostate, when first he lost his purity. Like me disconsolate, he wandered, and while yet in Heaven, bore all his future hell about him.

Enter TRUEMAN.

*True.* Barnwell, Oh, how I rejoice to see you safe! So will our master and his gentle daughter; who, during your absence, often inquired after you.

*Barn.* Would he were gone! His officious love will pry into the secrets of my soul. [Aside.]

*True.* Unless you knew the pain the whole family has felt on your account, you can't conceive how much you are beloved. But why thus cold and silent? When my heart is full of joy for your return, why do you turn away? why thus avoid me? What have I done? How am I altered since you saw me last? Or rather, what have you done? and why are you thus changed? for I am still the same?

*Barn.* What have I done, indeed! [Aside.]

*True.* Not speak!—nor look upon me!—

*Barn.* By my face he will discover all I would conceal; methinks already I begin to hate him. [Aside.]

*True.* I cannot bear this usage from a friend; one whom till now I ever found so loving; whom yet I



love; though this unkindness strikes at the root of friendship, and might destroy it in any breast but mine.

*Barn.* I am not well. [*Turning to him.*] Sleep has been a stranger to these eyes since you beheld them last.

*True.* Heavy they look indeed, and swoln with tears;—now they overflow. Rightly did my sympathising heart forebode last night, when thou wast absent, something fatal to our peace.

*Barn.* Your friendship engages you too far. My troubles, whate'er they are, are mine alone: you have no interest in them, nor ought your concern for me to give you a moment's pain.

*True.* You speak as if you knew of friendship nothing but the name. Before I saw your grief, I felt it. "Since we parted last I have slept no more than  
"you, but pensive in my chamber sat alone, and  
"spent the tedious night in wishes for your safety  
"and return:" e'en now, thought ignorant of the cause, your sorrow wounds me to the heart.

*Barn.* 'Twill not be always thus. Friendship and all engagements cease, as circumstances and occasions vary; and since you may hate me, perhaps it might be better for us both that now you loved me less.

*True.* Sure I but dream! Without a case would Barnwell use me thus? Ungenerous and ungrateful youth, farewell; I shall endeavour to follow your advice. [*Going.*] Yet stay, perhaps, I am too rash, and angry when the cause demands compassion. Some unforeseen calamity may have befallen him too great to bear.

*Barn.* What part am I reduced to act? 'Tis vile and base to move his temper thus, the best of friends and men.

*True.* I am to blame; pr'ythee, forgive me, Barnwell. Try to compose your ruffled mind; and let me know the cause that thus transports you from yourself; my friendly counsel may restore your peace.

*Barn.* All that is possible for man to do for man, your generous friendship may effect; but here even that's in vain.

*True.* Something dreadful is labouring in your breast; oh, give it vent, and let me share your grief; 'twill ease your pain, should it admit no cure, and make it lighter by the part I bear.

*Barn.* Vain supposition! my woes increase by being observed; should the cause be known, they would exceed all bounds.

*True.* So well I know thy honest heart, guilt cannot harbour there.

*Barn.* Oh, torture insupportable! [*Aside.*

*True.* Then why am I excluded? Have I a thought I would conceal from you?

*Barn.* If still you urge me on this hated subject, I'll never enter more beneath this roof, nor see your face again.

*True.* 'Tis strange—but I have done, say but you hate me not.

*Barn.* Hate you! I am not that monster yet.

*True.* Shall our friendship still continue?

*Barn.* It's a blessing I never was worthy of, yet now must stand on terms; and but upon conditions can confirm it.

*True.* What are they?

*Barn.* Never hereafter, though you should wonder at my conduct, desire to know more than I am willing to reveal.

*True.* 'Tis hard; but upon any conditions I must be your friend.

*Barn.* Then as much as one lost to himself can be another's, I am yours. [*Embracing.*

*True.* Be ever so, and may Heaven restore your peace!

“ *Barn.* Will yesterday return? We have heard  
“ the glorious sun, that till then incessant roll'd,  
“ once stopp'd his rapid course, and once went back.  
“ The dead have risen, and parched rocks pour'd  
“ forth a liquid stream to quench a people's thirst.

“ The sea divided, and form’d walls of water, while  
“ a whole nation pass’d in safety through its sandy  
“ bosom. Hungry lions have refus’d their prey; and  
“ men unhurt have walk’d amidst consuming flames;  
“ but never yet did time, once past return.”

“ *True.* Though the continued chain of time has  
“ never once been broke, nor ever will, but unin-  
“ terrupted must keep on its course, till lost in eter-  
“ nity, it ends where it first began; yet as Heaven  
“ can repair whatever evils time can bring upon us,  
“ we ought never to despair.” But business requires  
our attendance; business, the youth’s best preserva-  
tive from ill, as idleness his worst of snares. Will  
you go with me?

*Barn.* I’ll take a little time to reflect on what has  
past, and follow you. [*Exit Trueman.*] I might have  
trusted Trueman, and engaged him to apply to my  
uncle to repair the wrong I have done my master;  
but what of Millwood? “ Must I expose her too?  
“ Ungenerous and base! Then Heaven requires it  
“ not. But Heaven requires that I forsake her.  
“ What! never to see her more? Does Heaven require  
“ that! I hope I may see her, and Heaven not be of-  
“ fended. Presumptuous hope! Dearly already have  
“ I proved my frailty. Should I once more tempt  
“ Heaven, I may be left to fall never to rise again.  
“ Yet,” shall I leave her, for ever leave her, and let  
her know the cause? She who loves me with such a  
boundless passion! Can cruelty be duty? I judge of  
what she then must feel, by what I now endure. The  
love of life, and fear of shame, opposed by inclination  
strong as death or shame, like wind and tide in raging  
conflict meet, when neither can prevail, keep me in  
doubt. How then can I determine?

*Enter THOROWGOOD.*

*Thor.* Without a cause assign’d, or notice given, to  
absent yourself last night was a fault, young man,  
and I came to chide you for it, but I hope I am pre-  
vented. That modest blush, the confusion so visible  
in your face, speak grief and shame. When we have

offended Heaven, it requires no more; and shall man, who needs himself to be forgiven, be harder to appease? If my pardon or love be of moment to your peace, look up secure of both.

*Barn.* This goodness has o'ercome me. [*Aside.*] Oh, sir, you know not the nature and extent of my offence; and I should abuse your mistaken bounty to receive it. Though I had rather die than speak my shame; though racks could not have forced the guilty secret from my breast your kindness has.

*Thor.* Enough, enough, whate'er it be; this concern shews you're convinced, and I am satisfied. How painful is the sense of guilt to an ingenuous mind? Some youthful folly, which it were prudent not to inquire into. "When we consider the frail condition of humanity, it may raise our pity, not our wonder, that youth should go astray; when reason, weak at the best, opposed to inclination, scarce formed, and wholly unassisted by experience, faintly contends, or willingly becomes the slave of sense. The state of youth is much to be deplored, and the more so, because they see it not; being then to danger most exposed, when they are least prepared for their defence." [*Aside.*]

*Barn.* It will be known, and you'll recall your pardon and abhor me.

*Thor.* I never will. Yet be upon your guard in this gay thoughtless season of your life; "when the sense of pleasures quick, and passions high, the voluptuous appetites, raging and fierce, demand the strongest curb; take heed of a relapse:" when vice becomes habitual, the very power of leaving it is lost.

*Barn.* Hear me, on my knees, confess——

*Thor.* Not a syllable more upon this subject; it were not mercy, but cruelty, to hear what must give you such torment to reveal.

*Barn.* This generosity amazes and distracts me.

*Thor.* This remorse makes thee dearer to me than if thou hadst never offended. Whatever is your

fault, of this I am certain, 'twas harder for you to offend, than me to pardon. [*Exit Thorowgood.*]

*Barn.* Villain, villain, villain! basely to wrong so excellent a man. Should I again return to folly?—Detested thought!—But what of Millwood then?—Why, I renounce her?—I give her up——The struggle's over, and virtue has prevailed. Reason may convince, but gratitude compels. This unlooked-for generosity has saved me from destruction. [*Going.*]

*Enter a Footman.*

*Foot.* Sir, two ladies from your uncle in the country desire to see you.

*Barn.* Who should they be. [*Aside.*] Tell them I'll wait upon 'em.

*Barn.* Methinks I dread to see 'em———Now every thing alarms me.——Guilt, what a coward hast thou made me!

## SCENE II.

*Another Room in THOROWGOOD'S House. Enter MILLWOOD, LUCY, and a Footman.*

*Foot.* Ladies, he'll wait upon you immediately.

*Mill.* 'Tis very well.——I thank you. [*Exit Foot.*]

*Enter BARNWELL.*

*Barn.* Confusion! Millwood!

*Mill.* That angry look tells me that here I am an unwelcome guest; I feared as much; the unhappy are so every where.

*Barn.* Will nothing but my utter ruin content you?

*Mill.* Unkind and cruel! Lost myself, your happiness is now my only care.

*Barn.* How did you gain admission?

*Mill.* Saying we were desired by your uncle to visit, and deliver a message to you, we were received by the family without suspicion, and with much respect conducted here.

*Barn.* Why did you come at all?

*Mill.* I shall never trouble you more. I'm come to take my leave for ever. Such is the malice of my fate: I go hopeless, despairing ever to return. This hour is all I have left: one short hour is all I have



to bestow on love and you, for whom I thought the longest life too short.

*Barn.* Then we are met to part for ever?

*Mill.* It must be so. Yet think not that time or absence shall ever put a period to my grief, or make me love you less. Tho' I must leave you, yet condemn me not.

*Barn.* Condemn you! No, I approve your resolution, and rejoice to hear it; 'tis just——'tis necessary,——I have well weigh'd and found it so.

*Lucy.* I am afraid the young man has more sense than she thought he had. [Aside.]

*Barn.* Before you came, I had determined never to see you more.

*Mill.* Confusion! [Aside.]

*Lucy.* Ay, we are all out; this is a turn so unexpected, that I shall make nothing of my part; they must e'en play the scene betwixt themselves. [Aside.]

*Mill.* 'Twas some relief to think, tho' absent, you would love me still; but to find, "tho' fortune had been indulgent, that you, more cruel and inconstant," *you* had resolved to east me off——This, as I never could expect, I have not learnt to bear.

*Barn.* I am sorry to hear you blame me in a resolution that so well becomes us both.

*Mill.* I have reason for what I do, but you have none.

*Barn.* Can we want a reason for parting, who have so many to wish we never had met?

*Mill.* Look on me, Barnwell. Am I deform'd or old, that satiety so soon succeeds enjoyment? Nay, look again; am I not she whom yesterday you thought the fairest and the kindest of her sex; whose hand, trembling with ecstasy, you press'd and moulded thus, while on my eyes you gazed with such delight, as if desire increased by being fed?

*Barn.* No more; let me repent my former follies, if possible, without remembering what they were.

*Mill.* Why?

*Barn.* Such is my frailty, that 'tis dangerous.



*Mill.* Where is the danger, since we are to part?

*Barn.* The thought of that already is too painful.

*Mill.* If it be painful to part, then I may hope, at least, you do not hate me?

*Barn.* No——no——I never said I did——Oh, my heart!

*Mill.* Perhaps you pity me?

*Barn.* I do——I do——Indeed I do.

*Mill.* You'll think upon me?

*Barn.* Doubt it not, while I can think at all.

*Mill.* You may judge an embrace at parting too great a favour——though it would be the last. [*He draws back.*] A look shall then suffice——Farewell——for ever.

[*Exeunt Millwood and Lucy.*]

*Barn.* If to resolve to suffer be to conquer,——I have conquered——Painful victory!

*Re-enter MILLWOOD and LUCY.*

*Mill.* One thing I had forgot;——I never must return to my own house again. This I thought proper to let you know, lest your mind should change, and you should seek in vain to find me there. Forgive me this second intrusion; I only came to give you this caution, and that, perhaps, was needless.

*Barn.* I hope it was; yet it is kind, and I must thank you for it.

*Mill.* My friend, your arm. [*To Lucy.*] Now, I am gone for ever.

[*Going.*]

*Barn.* One thing more——Sure there's no danger in my knowing where you go? If you think otherwise——

*Mill.* Alas!

[*Weeping.*]

*Lucy.* We are right I find; that's my cue. [*Aside.*] Ah, dear sir! she's going she knows not whither; but go she must.

*Barn.* Humanity obliges me to wish you well: why will you thus expose yourself to needless troubles?

*Lucy.* Nay, there's no help for it: she must quit the town immediately, and the kingdom as soon as possible. It was no small matter you may be sure, that could make her resolve to leave you.

*Mill.* No more, my friend; since he for whose

dear sake alone I suffer, and am content to suffer, is kind and pities me; where'er I wander, thro' wilds and deserts benighted and forlorn, that thought shall give me comfort.

*Barn.* For my sake!—Oh, tell me how, which way am I so curs'd to bring such ruin on thee?

*Mill.* No matter; I am contented with my lot.

*Barn.* Leave me not in this uncertainty.

*Mill.* I have said too much.

*Barn.* How, how am I the cause of your undoing?

*Mill.* To know it will but increase your troubles.

*Barn.* My troubles can't be greater than they are.

*Lucy.* Well, well, sir, if she won't satisfy you, I will.

*Barn.* I am bound to you beyond expression.

*Mill.* Remember, sir, that I desired you not to hear it,

*Barn.* Begin, and ease my racking expectation.

*Lucy.* Why, you must know, my lady here was an only child, and her parents dying while she was young, left her and her fortune (no inconsiderable one, I assure you) to the care of a gentleman who has a good estate of his own.

*Mill.* Ay, ay, the barbarous man is rich enough; but what are riches when compared to love?

*Lucy.* For a while he performed the office of a faithful guardian, settled her in a house, hir'd her servants.—But you have seen in what manner she liv'd, so I need say no more of that.

*Mill.* How I shall live hereafter, Heaven knows!

*Lucy.* All things went on as one could wish; till some time ago, his wife dying, he fell violently in love with his charge, and would fain have marry'd her. Now the man is neither old nor ugly, but a good personable sort of a man, but I don't know how it was, she could never endure him. In short, her ill usage so provoked him, that he brought in an account of his executorship, wherein he makes her debtor to him.—

*Mill.* A trifle in itself, but more than enough to ruin me, whom by this unjust account, he had stripp'd of all before.

*Lucy.* Now, she having neither money nor friend, except me, who am as unfortunate as herself, he compell'd her to pass his account, and give bond for the sum he demanded; but still provided handsomely for her, and continued his courtship, till being informed by his spies (truly I suspect some in her own family), that you were entertained at her house, and staid with her all night, he came this morning raving and storming like a madman, talks no more of marriage (so there's no hope of making matters up that way), but vows her ruin, unless she'll allow him the same favour that he supposes she granted you.

*Barn.* Must she be ruin'd, or find her refuge in another's arms?

*Mill.* He gave me but an hour to resolve in; that's happily spent with you——And now I go——

*Barn.* To be exposed to all the rigours of the various seasons; the summer's parching heat, and winter's cold; unhoused, to wander, friendless, thro' the inhospitable world, in misery and want; attended with fear and danger, and pursued by malice and revenge. Wouldst thou endure all this for me, and can I do nothing, nothing to prevent it?

*Lucy.* 'Tis really a pity there can be no way found out.

*Barn.* Oh, where are all my resolutions now?  
“ Like early vapours, or the morning dew, chas'd by  
“ the sun's warm beams, they're vanish'd and lost,  
“ as tho' they had never been.”

*Lucy.* Now I advised her, sir, to comply with the gentleman; “ that would not only put an end to her  
“ troubles, but make her fortune at once.”

*Barn.* Tormenting fiend, away! I had rather perish, nay, see her perish, than have her saved by him. I will, myself, prevent her ruin, though with my own. A moment's patience; I'll return immediately.  
[Exit Barnwell.]

*Lucy.* 'Twas well you came, or by what I can perceive, you had lost him.

*Mill.* That I must confess, was a danger I did not foresee; I was only afraid he should have come without money. You know, a house of entertainment, like mine, is not kept without expence.

*Lucy.* That's very true; but then you should be reasonable in your demands; 'tis pity to discourage a young man.

*Mill.* Leave that to me.

*Re-enter BARNWELL, with a Bag of Money.*

*Barn.* What am I about to do?—Now you, who boast your reason all-sufficient, suppose yourselves in my condition, and determine for me; whether 'tis right to let her suffer for my faults, or, by this small addition to my guilt, prevent the ill effects of what is past.

*Lucy.* These young sinners think every thing in the ways of wickedness so strange!—But I could tell him, that this is nothing but what's very common; for one vice as naturally begets another, as a father a son. But he'll find out that himself, if he lives long enough. [*Aside.*

*Barn.* Here, take this, and with it purchase your deliverance; return to your house, and live in peace and safety.

*Mill.* So I may hope to see you there again?

*Barn.* Answer me not, but fly, lest in the agonies of my remorse, I take again what is not mine to give, and abandon thee to want and misery.

*Mill.* Say but you'll come.

*Barn.* You are my fate, my Heaven or my hell; only leave me now, dispose of me hereafter as you please. [*Exeunt Millwood and Lucy.*

What have I done? Were my resolutions founded on reason, and sincerely made? Why then has Heaven suffered me to fall? I sought not the occasion; and if my heart deceives me not, compassion and generosity were my motives. “Is virtue inconsistent with itself, or are vice and virtue only empty names;

“ or do they depend on accidents, beyond our power  
“ to produce, or to prevent; wherein we have no  
“ part, and yet must be determined by the event?”  
But why should I attempt to reason? All is confusion, horror, and remorse. I find I am lost, cast down from all my late-erected hope, and plunged again in guilt, yet scarce know how or why:

*Such undistinguish'd horrors make my brain,  
Like hell, the seat of darkness and of pain.* [Exit.

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## ACT III. SCENE I.

*A Room in THOROWGOOD's House. THOROWGOOD and TRUEMAN discovered (with Account Books) sitting at a Table.*

“ *Thorowgood.* METHINKS I would not have you  
“ only learn the method of merchandise, and practise  
“ it hereafter, merely as a means of getting wealth:  
“ it will be well worth your pains to study it as a  
“ science, to see how it is founded in reason and the  
“ nature of things; how it promotes humanity, as  
“ it has open'd, and yet keeps up an intercourse be-  
“ tween nations, far remote from one another in si-  
“ tuation, customs, and religion; promoting arts,  
“ industry, peace, and plenty; by mutual benefits  
“ diffusing mutual love from pole to pole.

“ *True.* Something of this I have consider'd; and  
“ hope, by your assistance, to extend my thoughts  
“ much farther. I have observ'd those countries  
“ where trade is promoted and encouraged, do not  
“ make discoveries to destroy, but to improve man-  
“ kind by love and friendship; to tame the fierce,  
“ and polish the most savage; to teach them the ad-  
“ vantage of honest traffic, by taking from them,  
“ with their own consent, their useless superfluities,  
“ and giving them, in return, what, from their ig-  
“ norance in manual arts, their situation, or some  
“ other accident they stand in need of.

“ *Thor.* 'Tis justly observ'd: the populous east,



“luxuriant, abounds with glittering gems, bright  
 “pearls, aromatic spices, and health-restoring drugs:  
 “the late found western world’s rich earth glows  
 “with unnumber’d veins of gold and silver ore. On  
 “every climate, and on every country, Heaven has  
 “bestow’d some good peculiar to itself. It is the  
 “industrious merchant’s business to collect the va-  
 “rious blessings of each soil and climate, and with  
 “the product of the whole to enrich his native coun-  
 “try.”——Well, I have examin’d your accounts;  
 they are not only just, as I have always found them,  
 but regularly kept, and fairly enter’d. I commend  
 your diligence. Method in business is the surest  
 guide: “he who neglects it, frequently stumbles, and  
 “always wanders perplex’d, uncertain, and in dan-  
 “ger.” Are Barnwell’s accounts ready for my in-  
 spection? He does not use to be the last on these  
 occasions.

*True.* Upon receiving your orders he retir’d, I  
 thought in some confusion. If you please, I’ll go  
 and hasten him. I hope he has not been guilty of  
 any neglect.

*Thor.* I’m now going to the Exchange; let him know  
 at my return I expect to find him ready. [*Exeunt.*]

*Enter MARIA with a Book. Sits and reads.*

*Mar.* How forcible is truth! The weakest mind,  
 inspired with love of that, fixed and collected in itself,  
 with indifference beholds the united force of earth  
 and hell opposing. Such souls are raised above the  
 sense of pain, or so supported that they regard it not.  
 The martyr cheaply purchases his Heaven; small are  
 his sufferings, great is his reward. Not so the wretch  
 who combats love with duty; whose mind, weak-  
 ened and dissolved by the soft passion, feeble and  
 hopeless, opposes his own desires——What is an  
 hour, a day, a year of pain, to a whole life of tortures  
 such as these?

*Enter TRUEMAN.*

*True.* Oh, Barnwell! Oh, my friend! how art thou  
 fallen!



*Mar.* Ha! Barnwell! What of him? Speak, say, what of Barnwell?

*True.* 'Tis not to be conceal'd: I've news to tell of him, that will afflict your generous father, yourself, and all who know him.

*Mar.* Defend us, Heaven!

*True.* I cannot speak it. See there. [*Gives a letter.*]

*Mar.* [*Reads.*] 'I know my absence will surprise my honoured master and yourself; and the more, when you shall understand that the reason of my withdrawing is my having embezzled part of the cash with which I was entrusted. After this, 'tis needless to inform you, that I intend never to return again. Though this might have been known by examining my accounts, yet to prevent that unnecessary trouble, and to cut off all fruitless expectations of my return, I have left this from the lost

GEORGE BARNWELL.'

*True.* Lost indeed! Yet how he should be guilty of what he there charges himself withal, raises my wonder equal to my grief. Never had youth a higher sense of virtue. Justly he thought, and as he thought he practised; never was life more regular than his.—An understanding uncommon at his years, an open, generous manliness of temper, his manners easy, unaffected, and engaging.

*Mar.* This, and much more, you might have said with truth. He was the delight of every eye, and joy of every heart that knew him.

*True.* Since such he was, and was my friend, can I support his loss? See, the fairest, happiest maid this wealthy city boasts, kindly condescends to weep for thy unhappy fate, poor, ruined Barnwell!

*Mar.* Trueman, do you think a soul so delicate as his, so sensible of shame, can e'er submit to live a slave to vice?

*True.* Never, never. So well I know him, I'm sure this act of his, so contrary to his nature, must have been caused by some unavoidable necessity.

*Mar.* Is there no means yet to preserve him?

*True.* Oh, that there were! but few men recover their reputation lost, a merchant never. Nor would he, I fear, though I should find him, ever be brought to look his injured master in the face.

*Mar.* I fear as much, and therefore would never have my father know it.

*True.* That's impossible.

*Mar.* What's the sum?

*True.* 'Tis considerable; I've marked it here, to shew it, with the letter, to your father, at his return.

*Mar.* If I should supply the money, could you so dispose of that and the account, as to conceal this unhappy mismanagement from my father?

*True.* Nothing more easy. But can you intend it?—Will you save a helpless wretch from ruin?—Oh, 'twere an act worthy such exalted virtue as Maria's! Sure Heaven, in mercy to my friend, inspired the generous thought.

*Mar.* Doubt not but I would purchase so great a happiness at a much dearer price. But how shall he be found?

*True.* Trust to my diligence for that. In the mean time, I'll conceal his absence from your father, or find such excuses for it, that the real cause shall never be suspected.

*Mar.* In attempting to save from shame, one whom we hope, may yet return to virtue, to Heaven, and you, the only witnesses of this action, I appeal, whether I do any thing misbecoming my sex and character.

*True.* Earth must approve the deed, and Heaven, I doubt not, will reward it.

*Mar.* If Heaven succeeds it, I am well rewarded. A virgin's fame is sullied by suspicion's lightest breath; and, therefore, as this must be a secret from my father and the world, for Barnwell's sake, for mine, let it be so to him. [Exit.]

#### SCENE II.

MILLWOOD's House. Enter LUCY and BLUNT.

*Lucy.* Well, what do you think of Millwood's conduct now?

*Blunt.* I own it is surprising: I don't know which to admire most, her feigned, or his real passion; tho' I have sometimes been afraid that her avarice would discover her. But his youth and want of experience make it the easier to impose on him.

*Lucy.* No, it is his love. To do him justice, notwithstanding his youth, he don't want understanding. But you men are much easier imposed on in these affairs, than your vanity will allow you to believe. Let me see the wisest of you all as much in love with me as Barnwell is with Millwood, and I'll engage to make as great a fool of him.

*Blunt.* And, all circumstances considered, to make as much money of him too?

*Lucy.* I can't answer for that. Her artifice, in making him rob his master at first, and the various stratagems by which she has obliged him to continue that course, astonish even me, who know her so well.

*Blunt.* But then you are to consider that the money was his master's.

*Lucy.* There was the difficulty of it. Had it been his own, it had been nothing. Were the world his, she might have it for a smile. But those golden days are done: he's ruined, and Millwood's hopes of farther profits there are at an end.

*Blunt.* That's no more than we all expected.

*Lucy.* Being called by his master to make up his accounts, he was forced to quit his house and service, and wisely flies to Millwood for relief and entertainment.

*Blunt.* I have not heard of this before: how did she receive him?

*Lucy.* As you would expect. She wondered what he meant, was astonished at his impudence, and with an air of modesty peculiar to herself, swore so heartily that she never saw him before, that she put me out of countenance.

*Blunt.* That's much indeed! But how did Barnwell behave?

*Lucy.* He grieved; and at length enraged at this

barbarous treatment, was preparing to be gone ; and making towards the door, shewed a sum of money, which he had brought from his master's, the last he is ever likely to have from thence.

*Blunt.* But then, Millwood——

*Lucy.* Ay, she, with her usual address, returned to her old arts of lying, swearing, and dissembling; hung on his neck, wept, and swore 'twas meant in jest. The amorous youth melted into tears, threw the money into her lap, and swore he had rather die than think her false.

*Blunt.* Strange infatuation !

*Lucy.* But what ensued was stranger still. As doubts and fears, followed by reconciliation, ever increase love where the passion is sincere ; so in him it caused so wild a transport of excessive fondness, such joy, such grief, such pleasure, and such anguish, that nature seemed sinking with the weight, and his charmed soul disposed to quit his breast for her's. Just then, when every passion with lawless anarchy prevailed, and reason was in the raging tempest lost, the cruel, artful Millwood prevailed upon the wretched youth to promise—what I tremble but to think of.

*Blunt.* I am amazed ! What can it be ?

*Lucy.* You will be more so, to hear it is to attempt the life of his nearest relation and best benefactor.

*Blunt.* His uncle ! whom we have often heard him speak of as a gentleman of a large estate, and fair character, in the country where he lives !

*Lucy.* The same. She was no sooner possessed of the last dear purchase of his ruin, but her avarice, insatiate as the grave, demanded this horrid sacrifice. Barnwell's near relation, “ and unsuspected virtue, “ must give too easy means to seize this good man's “ treasure ;” whose blood must seal the dreadful secret, and prevent the terrors of her guilty fears.

*Blunt.* Is it possible she could persuade him to do an act like that. He is by nature honest, grateful, compassionate, and generous ; “ and though his love, “ and her artful persuasions, have wrought him to

“ practise what he most abhors ; yet we all can witness for him, with what reluctance he has still complied : so many tears he shed o’er each offence, as might, if possible, sanctify theft, and make a merit of a crime.”

*Lucy.* 'Tis true, at the naming of the murder of his uncle he started into rage ; and, breaking from her arms (where she till then had held him with well-dissembled love, and false endearments), called her cruel, monster, devil, and told her she was born for his destruction. She thought it not for her purpose to meet his rage with her rage, but affected a most passionate fit of grief, railed at her fate, and cursed her wayward stars, that still her wants should force her to press him to act such deeds, as she must needs abhor as well as he. She told him necessity had no law, and love no bounds ; that therefore he never truly loved, but meant, in her necessity, to forsake her. Then she kneeled, and swore, that since by his refusal, he had given her cause to doubt his love, she never would see him more, unless to prove it true, he robbed his uncle to supply her wants, and murdered him to keep it from discovery.

*Blunt.* I am astonished. What said he?

*Lucy.* Speechless he stood ; but in his face you might have read, that various passions tore his very soul. Oft he in anguish threw his eyes towards Heaven, “ and then as often bent their beams on her ;” then wept and groaned, and beat his troubled breast : at length, with horror not to be express’d, he cried—  
“ Thou cursed fair, have I not given dreadful proofs of love? What drew me from my youthful innocence, and stained my then unspotted soul, but love? What caused me to rob my worthy, gentle master, but cursed love? What makes me now a fugitive from his service, loathed by myself, and scorned by all the world, but love! What fills my eyes with tears, my soul with torture never felt on this side death before? Why love, love, love! And why, above all, do I



resolve (for, tearing his hair, he cried, I do resolve) to kill my uncle?’

*Blunt.* Was she not moved? It makes me weep to hear the sad relation.

*Lucy.* Yes—with joy, that she had gained her point. She gave him no time to cool, but urged him to attempt it instantly. He’s now gone. If he performs it, and escapes, there’s more money for her; if not, he’ll ne’er return, and then she’s fairly rid of him.

*Blunt.* ’Tis time the world were rid of such a monster.

*Lucy.* If we don’t use our endeavours to prevent the murder, we are as bad as she.

*Blunt.* I am afraid it is too late.

*Lucy.* Perhaps not. Her barbarity to Barnwell makes me hate her. We have run too great a length with her already. I did not think her or myself so wicked, as I find, upon reflection, we are.

*Blunt.* ’Tis true, we have been all too much so. But there is something so horrid in murder, that all other crimes seem nothing when compared to that: I would not be involved in the guilt of it for all the world.

*Lucy.* Nor I, Heaven knows. Therefore, let us clear ourselves, by doing all that is in our power to prevent it. I have just thought of a way that to me seems probable. Will you join with me to detect this cursed design?

*Blunt.* With all my heart. He who knows of a murder intended to be committed, and does not discover it, in the eye of the law and reason is a murderer.

*Lucy.* Let us lose no time; I’ll acquaint you with the particulars as we go. [*Exeunt.*]

### SCENE III.

*A Walk at some distance from a Country-Seat.*

*Enter BARNWELL.*

*Barn.* A dismal gloom obscures the face of day. Either the sun has slipped behind a cloud, or journeys down the west of heaven with more than common speed, to avoid the sight of what I am doomed



to act. Since I set forth on 'this accursed design, where'er I tread, methinks, the solid earth trembles beneath my feet. *Murder my uncle!*—"Yonder  
"limpid stream, whose hoary fall has made a natural cascade, as I passed by, in doleful accents  
"seemed to murmur—Murder! The earth, the air,  
"and water, seem'd concern'd. But that's not  
"strange: the world is punish'd, and nature feels a  
"shock, when Providence permits a good man's fall.  
"Just Heaven! then what should I feel for him  
"that was" my father's only brother, and since his death has been to me a father; that took me up an infant and an orphan, reared me with tenderest care, and still indulged me with most paternal fondness? Yet here I stand his destined murderer—I stiffen with horror at my own impiety—"Tis yet unperform'd—What if I quit my bloody purpose, and fly the place? [*Going, then stops.*]—But whither, oh, whither shall I fly? My master's once friendly doors are ever shut against me; and without money Millwood will never see me more; and she has got such firm possession of my heart, and governs there with such despotic sway, that life is not to be endured without her. Ay, there's the cause of all my sin and sorrow: 'tis more than love; it is the fever of the soul, and madness of desire. In vain does nature, reason, conscience, all oppose it; the impetuous passion bears down all before it, and drives me on to lust, to theft, and murder. Oh, conscience! feeble guide to virtue, thou only shew'st us when we go astray, but wantest power to stop us in our course!—Ha! in yonder shady walk I see my uncle—He's alone—Now for my disguise. [*Plucks out a vizor.*]—This is his hour of private meditation. Thus daily he prepares his soul for Heaven; while I—But what have I to do with Heaven? Ha! no struggles, conscience—

*Hence, hence remorse, and every thought that's good;  
The storm that lust began, must end in blood.*

[Puts on the vizor, draws a pistol, and exit.]

## SCENE IV.

*A close Walk in a Wood. Enter Uncle.*

*Unc.* If I were superstitious, I should fear some danger lurked unseen, or death were nigh. A heavy melancholy clouds my spirits. My imagination is filled with ghastly forms of dreary graves, and bodies changed by death; when the pale lengthened visage attracts each weeping eye, and fills the musing soul at once with grief and horror, pity and aversion. —I will indulge the thought. The wise man prepares himself for death, by making it familiar to his mind. When strong reflections hold the mirror near, and the living in the dead behold their future self, how does each inordinate passion and desire cease, or sicken at the view! The mind scarce moves; the blood, curdling and chilled, creeps slowly through the veins: fixed, still, and motionless we stand, so like the solemn object of our thoughts, we are almost at present what we must be hereafter; till curiosity awakes the soul, and sets it on enquiry.

*Enter BARNWELL at a distance.*

Oh, death! thou strange mysterious power, seen every day, yet never understood, but by the incommunicative dead, what art thou? The extensive mind of man, that with a thought circles the earth's vast globe, sinks to the centre, or ascends above the stars; that worlds exotic finds, or thinks it finds, thy thick clouds attempts to pass in vain; lost and bewildered in the horrid gloom, defeated, she returns more doubtful than before, of nothing certain but of labour lost.

*[During this speech, Barnwell sometimes presents the pistol, and draws it back again.]*

*Barn.* Oh! 'tis impossible.

*[Throwing down the pistol.]*

*[Uncle starts, and attempts to draw his sword.]*

*Unc.* A man so near me! armed and masked——

*Barn.* Nay, then, there's no retreat.

*[Plucks a poniard from his bosom, and stabs him.]*

*Unc.* Oh! I am slain. All gracious Heaven, regard the prayer of thy dying servant: bless, with the choicest blessings, my dearest nephew; forgive my murderer, and take my fleeting soul to endless mercy.

[*Barnwell throws off his mask, runs to him, and, kneeling by him, raises and chafes him.*

*Barn.* Expiring saint! Oh, murdered, martyred uncle! lift up your dying eyes, and view your nephew in your murderer—Oh, do not look so tenderly upon me!—Let indignation lighten from your eyes, and blast me ere you die.—By Heaven, he weeps, in pity of my woes.—Tears, tears, for blood!—The murdered, in the agonies of death, weeps for his murderer.—Oh, speak your pious purpose; pronounce my pardon then, and take me with you—He would, but cannot—Oh, why, with such fond affection, do you press my murdering hand?—[*Uncle sighs and dies.*]—“What, will you kiss me?”—Life that hovered on his lips but till he had sealed my pardon, in that sigh expired.—He’s gone for ever, “and, oh! I follow—[*Swoons away upon his uncle’s dead body.*]”—Do I still breathe, and taint with my infectious breath the wholesome air?—Let Heaven from its high throne, in justice or in mercy now look down on that dear murdered saint, and me the murderer; and if his vengeance spares, let pity strike and end my wretched being.—Murder the worst of crimes, and parricide the worst of murders, and this the worst of parricides.—“Cain, who stands on record, from the birth of time, and must to its last final period, as accursed, slew a brother favoured above him: detested Nero, by another hand, dispatched a mother that he feared and hated: but I, with my own hand, have murdered a brother, mother, father, and a friend most loving and beloved.—This execrable act of mine is without a parallel.—Oh, may it ever stand alone, the last of murders, as it is the worst!

“*The rich man thus, in torment and despair,*

“*Preferr’d his vain, his charitable pray’r.*

“ *The fool, his own soul lost, would fain be wise*  
 “ *For others’ good, but Heav’n his suit denies.*  
 “ *By laws and means well-known we stand or fall;*  
 “ *And one eternal rule remains for all.”*  
 Oh, may it ever stand alone accurst,  
 The last of murders, as it is the worst. [Exit.

# ACT IV. SCENE I.

*A Room in THOROWGOOD’S House. Enter MARIA, meeting TRUEMAN.*

*Maria.* “ How falsely do they judge, who censure  
 “ or applaud, as we are afflicted or rewarded here. I  
 “ know I am unhappy; yet cannot charge myself with  
 “ any crime, more than the common frailties of our  
 “ kind, that should provoke just Heaven to mark me  
 “ out for sufferings so uncommon and severe. Falsely  
 “ to accuse ourselves, Heaven must abhor. Then it  
 “ is just and right that innocence should suffer; for  
 “ Heaven must be just in all its ways. Perhaps by  
 “ that we are kept from moral evils, much worse  
 “ than penal, or more improved in virtue. Or may  
 “ not the lesser ills that we sustain be made the  
 “ means of greater good to others? Might all the  
 “ joyless days and sleepless nights that I have passed,  
 “ but purchase peace for thee,  
 “ *Thou dear, dear cause of all my grief and pain!*  
 “ *Small were the loss, and infinite the gain;*  
 “ *Though to the grave in secret love I pine,*  
 “ *So life, and fame, and happiness were thine.”*

What news of Barnwell?

*True.* None; I have sought him with the greatest diligence, but all in vain.

*Mar.* Does my father yet suspect the cause of his absence?

*True.* All appeared so just and fair to him, it is not possible he ever should. But his absence will no longer be concealed. Your father is wise; and though he seems to hearken to the friendly excuses I would make

for Barnwell, yet I am afraid he regards them only as such, without suffering them to influence his judgment.

*Mar.* How does the unhappy youth defeat all our designs to serve him! yet I can never repent what we have done. Should he return, 'twill make his reconciliation with my father easier, and pre-serve him from future reproach of a malicious unforgiving world."

*Enter THOROWGOOD and LUCY.*

*Thor.* This woman here has given me a sad, and, 'bating some circumstances, too probable an account of Barnwell's defection.

*Lucy.* I am sorry, sir, that my frank confession of my former unhappy course of life; should cause you to suspect my truth on this occasion.

*Thor.* It is not that; your confession has in it all the appearance of truth. Among many other particulars, she informs me that Barnwell has been influenced to break his trust, and wrong me at several times of considerable sums of money. Now, as I know this to be false, I would fain doubt the whole of her relation, too dreadful to be willingly believed.

*Mar.* Sir, your pardon; I find myself on a sudden so indisposed that I must retire. "Providence opposes all attempts to save him." Poor ruined Barnwell! Wretched, lost Maria! [*Aside. Exit.*]

*Thor.* How am I distressed on every side! Pity for that unhappy youth, fear for the life of a much valued friend—and then my child—the only joy and hope of my declining life!—Her melancholy increases hourly, and gives me painful apprehensions of her loss—Oh, Trueman, this person informs me that your friend, at the instigation of an impious woman, is gone to rob and murder his venerable uncle.

*True.* Oh, execrable deed! I am blasted with the horror of the thought,

*Lucy.* This delay may ruin all.

*Thor.* What to do or think, I know not. That he



ever wronged me, I know is false; the rest may be so too; there's all my hope.

*True.* Trust not to that; rather suppose all true, than lose a moment's time. Even now the horrid deed may be doing—dreadful imagination!—or it may be done, and we be vainly debating on the means to prevent what is already past.

*Thor.* This earnestness convinces me, that he knows more than he has yet discovered. What, ho! without there! who waits?

*Enter Servant.*

Order the groom to saddle the swiftest horse, and prepare to set out with speed; an affair of life and death demands his diligence. [*Exit Servant.*] For you, whose behaviour on this occasion I have no time to commend as it deserves, I must engage your further assistance. Return and observe this Millwood till I come. I have your directions, and will follow you as soon as possible. [*Exit Lucy.*] Trueman, you, I am sure will not be idle on this occasion.

[*Exit Thorowgood.*

*True.* He only who is a friend can judge of my distress.

[*Exit.*

## SCENE II.

MILLWOOD's House. *Enter MILLWOOD.*

*Mill.* I wish I knew the event of his design. The attempt without success would ruin him. Well; what have I to apprehend from that? I fear too much. The mischief being only intended, his friends, through pity of his youth, turn all their rage on me. I should have thought on that before. Suppose the deed done; then, and then only, I shall be secure.—Or what if he returns without attempting it at all!—

*Enter BARNWELL bloody.*

But he is here, and I have done him wrong. His bloody hands shew he has done the deed, but shew he wants the prudence to conceal it.

*Barn.* Where shall I hide me? Whither shall I fly, to avoid the swift unerring hand of justice?

*Mill.* Dismiss your fears: though thousands had



pursued you to the door, yet being entered here, you are as safe as innocence. I have a cavern, by art so cunningly contrived, that the piercing eyes of jealousy and revenge may search in vain, nor find the entrance to the safe retreat. There will I hide you, if any danger's near.

*Barn.* Oh, hide me—from myself, if it be possible; for while I bear my conscience in my bosom, though I were hid where man's eye never saw, nor light e'er dawned, 'twere all in vain. For, oh, that inmate, that impartial judge, will try, convict, and sentence me for murder, and execute me with never-ending torments. Behold these hands, all crimsoned o'er with my dear uncle's blood. Here's a sight to make a statue start with horror, or turn a living man into a statue!

*Mill.* Ridiculous! then it seems you are afraid of your own shadow, or, what's less than a shadow, your conscience.

*Barn.* Though to man unknown I did the accursed act, what can we hide from Heaven's all-seeing eye?

*Mill.* No more of this stuff. What advantage have you made of his death? or what advantage may yet be made of it? Did you secure the keys of his treasure, which no doubt were about him? What gold, what jewels, or what else of value have you brought me?

*Barn.* Think you I added sacrilege to murder?—Oh, had you seen him as his life flowed from him in a crimson flood, and heard him praying for me by the double name of nephew and of murderer—(alas, alas, he knew not then, that his nephew was his murderer!)—how would you have wished, as I did, though you had a thousand years of life to come, to have given them all to have lengthened his one hour! But being dead, I fled the sight of what my hands had done: nor could I, to have gained the empire of the world, have violated, by theft, his sacred corpse.

*Mill.* Whining, preposterous, canting villain! to murder your uncle, rob him of life, nature's first,

last, dear prerogative, after which there's no injury, then fear to take what he no longer wanted, and bring to me your penury and guilt. Do you think I'll hazard my reputation and life, to entertain you?

*Barn.* Oh, Millwood!—this from thee?—But I have done. If you hate me, if you wish me dead, then are you happy; for, oh, 'tis sure my grief will quickly end me,

*Mill.* In his madness he will discover all, and involve me in his ruin. We are on a precipice from whence there's no retreat for both—Then to preserve myself—[*Pauses.*—]—There is no other way. —'Tis dreadful, but reflection comes too late when danger's pressing, and there's no room for choice. —It must be done. [*Aside. Rings a bell, enter a Servant.*] Fetch me an officer, and seize this villain. He has confessed himself a murderer. Should I let him escape, I might justly be thought as bad as he.

[*Exit Servant.*]

*Barn.* Oh, Millwood! sure you do not, you cannot mean it. Stop the messenger; upon my knees, I beg you'd call him back. 'Tis fit I die indeed, but not by you. I will this instant deliver myself into the hands of justice, indeed I will; for death is all I wish. But thy ingratitude so tears my wounded soul, 'tis worse ten thousand times than death with torture.

*Mill.* Call it what you will; I am willing to live, and live secure, which nothing but your death can warrant.

*Barn.* If there be a pitch of wickedness that sets the author beyond the reach of vengeance, you must be secure. But what remains for me, but a dismal dungeon, hard galling fetters, an awful trial, and an ignominious death, justly to fall unpitied and abhorred: “After death to be suspended between  
“heaven and earth, a dreadful spectacle, the warning and horror of a gaping crowd!” This I could bear, nay, wish not to avoid, had it but come from any hand but thine.

*Enter BLUNT, Officer, and Attendants.*

*Mill.* Heaven defend me! Conceal a murderer! Here, sir, take this youth into your custody. I accuse him of murder, and will appear to make good my charge.      [*They seize him.*]

*Barn.* To whom, of what, or how shall I complain? I'll not accuse her. The hand of Heaven is in it, and this is the punishment of lust and parricide. "Yet  
" Heaven, that justly cuts me off, still suffers her to  
" live; perhaps to punish others. Tremendous mercy!  
" So fiends are cursed with immortality, to be the  
" executioners of Heaven."

*Be warn'd, ye youths, who see my sad despair :  
Avoid lewd women, false as they are fair.*

*" By reason guided, honest joys pursue :*

*" The fair, to honour and to virtue true,*

*" Just to herself, will ne'er be false to you."*

*By my example learn to shun my fate :*

*(How wretched is the man who's wise too late!)*

*Ere innocence, and fame, and life be lost,*

*Here purchase wisdom cheaply, at my cost.*

[*Exeunt Barnwell, Officer, and Attendants.*]

*Mill.* Where's Lucy? why is she absent at such a time?

*Blunt.* Would I had been so too! Lucy will soon be here; and I hope to thy confusion, thou devil!

*Mill.* Insolent!—this to me?

*Blunt.* The worst that we know of the devil is, that he first seduces to sin, and then betrays to punishment.      [*Exit.*]

*Mill.* They disapprove of my conduct then, "and  
" mean to take this opportunity to set up for them-  
" selves."—My ruin is resolved.—I see my danger, but scorn both it and them. I was not born to fall by such weak instruments.      [*Going.*]

*Enter THOROWGOOD.*

*Thor.* Where is the scandal of her own sex, and curse of ours?

*Mill.* What means this insolence? Whom do you seek?

*Thor.* Millwood.

*Mill.* Well, you have found her then. I am Millwood.

*Thor.* Then you are the most impious wretch that e'er the sun beheld.

*Mill.* From your appearance I should have expected wisdom and moderation, but your manners belie your aspect. What is your business here? I know you not.

*Thor.* Hereafter you may know me better; I am Barnwell's master.

*Mill.* Then you are master to a villain, which, I think, is not much to your credit.

*Thor.* Had he been as much above thy arts, as my credit is superior to thy malice, I need not have blushed to own him.

*Mill.* My arts! I don't understand you, sir; if he has done amiss, what's that to me? Was he my servant, or your's? you should have taught him better.

*Thor.* Why should I wonder to find such uncommon impudence in one arrived to such a height of wickedness? "When innocence is banished, modesty soon follows." Know, sorceress, I'm not ignorant of any of the arts by which you first deceived the unwary youth. I know how, step by step, you've led him on, reluctant and unwilling, from crime to crime, to this last horrid act, which you contrived, and by your cursed wiles even forced him commit.

*Mill.* Ha! Lucy has got the advantage, and accused me first. Unless I can turn the accusation, and fix it upon her and Blunt, I am lost. [*Aside.*]

*Thor.* Had I known your cruel design sooner, it had been prevented. To see you punished, as the law directs, is all that now remains. Poor satisfaction! for he, innocent as he is, compared to you, must suffer too. "But Heaven, who knows our frame, and graciously distinguishes between frailty and presumption, will make a difference, though

“man cannot, who sees not the heart, but only judges by the outward action.”

*Mill.* I find, sir, we are both unhappy in our servants. I was surprised at such ill treatment without cause from a gentleman of your appearance, and therefore too hastily returned it; for which I ask your pardon. I now perceive you have been so far imposed on, as to think me engaged in a former correspondence with your servant, and some way or other accessory to his undoing.

*Thor.* I charge you as the cause, the sole cause of all his guilt, and all his suffering, of all he now endures, and must endure, till a violent and shameful death shall put a dreadful period to his life and miseries together.

*Mill.* 'Tis very strange. But who's secure from scandal and detraction? So far from contributing to his ruin, I never spoke to him till since this fatal accident, which I lament as much as you. 'Tis true, I have a servant on whose account he hath of late frequented my house. If she has abused my good opinion of her, am I to blame? Has not Barnwell done the same by you?

*Thor.* I hear you; pray go on.

*Mill.* I have been informed he had a violent passion for her, and she for him: but till now I always thought it innocent. I know her poor, and given to expensive pleasures. Now, who can tell but she may have influenced the amorous youth to commit this murder to supply her extravagancies?—It must be so. I now recollect a thousand circumstances that confirm it. I'll have her and a man-servant whom I suspect as an accomplice, secured immediately. I hope, sir, you will lay aside your ill-grounded suspicions of me, and join to punish the real contrivers of this bloody deed.

[*Offers to go.*]

*Thor.* Madam, you pass not this way; I see your design, but shall protect them from your malice.

*Mill.* I hope you will not use your influence, and the credit of your name, to screen such guilty



wretches. Consider, sir, the wickedness of persuading a thoughtless youth to such a crime.

*Thor.* I do——and of betraying him when it was done.

*Mill.* That which you call betraying him may convince you of my innocence. She who loves him, though she contrived the murder, would never have delivered him into the hands of justice, as I, struck with horror at his crimes, have done.

*Thor.* How should an unexperienced youth escape her snares? “The powerful magic of her wit and form might betray the wisest to simple dotage, and fire the blood that age had froze long since.” Even I, that with just prejudice came prepared, had by her artful story been deceived, but that my strong conviction of her guilt makes even a doubt impossible. [*Aside.*] Those whom subtilly you would accuse, you know are your accusers; and, which proves unanswerably their innocence and your guilt, they accused you before the deed was done, and did all that was in their power to prevent it.

*Mill.* Sir, you are very hard to be convinced; but I have a proof, which, when produced, will silence all objections. [*Exit Millwood.*]

*Enter LUCY, TRUUMAN, BLUNT, Officers, &c.*

*Lucy.* Gentlemen, pray place yourselves, some on one side of that door, and some on the other; watch her entrance, and act as your prudence shall direct you. This way, [*To Thorowgood.*] and note her behaviour. I have observed her; she’s driven to the last extremity, and is forming some desperate resolution. I guess at her design.

*Re-enter MILLWOOD with a Pistol; TRUUMAN secures her.*

*True.* Here thy power of doing mischief ends, deceitful, cruel, bloody woman!

*Mill.* Fool, hypocrite, villain, man! thou canst not call me that.

*True.* To call thee woman were to wrong thy sex, thou devil!



*Mill.* That imaginary being is an emblem of thy cursed sex collected. A mirror, wherein each particular man may see his own likeness, and that of all mankind.

*Thor.* Think not, by aggravating the faults of others, to extenuate thy own, of which the abuse of such uncommon perfections of mind and body is not the least.

*Mill.* If such I had, well may I curse your barbarous sex, who robbed me of 'em ere I knew their worth; then left me, too late, to count their value by their loss. Another and another spoiler came, and all my gain was poverty and reproach. My soul disdain'd, and yet disdains, dependence and contempt. Riches, no matter by what means obtained, I saw secured the worst of men from both. I found it therefore necessary to be rich, and to that end I summoned all my arts. You call 'em wicked, be it so, they were such as my conversation with your sex had furnished me withal.

*Thor.* Sure none but the worst of men conversed with thee.

*Mill.* Men of all degrees, and all professions, I have known, yet found no difference, but in their several capacities; all were alike wicked to the utmost of their power. "In pride, contention, avarice, cruelty, and revenge, the reverend priesthood were my unerring guides. From suburb magistrates, who live by ruined reputations, as the unhospitable natives of Cornwall do by shipwrecks, I learned, that to charge my innocent neighbours with my crimes, was to merit their protection: for to screen the guilty is the less scandalous, when many are suspected; and detraction, like darkness and death, blackens all objects, and levels all distinction.—Such are your venal magistrates, who favour none but such as by their office they are sworn to punish. With them, not to be guilty is the worst of crimes; and large fees, privately paid, are every needful virtue.

“ *Thor.* Your practice has sufficiently discovered  
“ your contempt of laws, both human and divine;  
“ no wonder then, that you should hate the officers  
“ of both.

“ *Mill.* I know you, and I hate you all; I expect no mercy, and I ask for none; I followed my inclinations, and that the best of you do every day.  
“ All actions seem alike natural and indifferent to  
“ man and beast, who devour, or are devoured, as  
“ they meet with others weaker or stronger than  
“ themselves.

“ *Thor.* What pity it is a mind so comprehensive,  
“ daring, and inquisitive, should be a stranger to  
“ religion’s sweet and powerful charms!

“ *Mill.* I am not fool enough to be an atheist,  
“ though I have known enough of men’s hypocrisy  
“ to make a thousand simple women so. Whatever  
“ religion is in itself, as practis’d by mankind, it has  
“ caused the evils you say it was designed to cure.  
“ War, plague, and famine have not destroyed so  
“ many of the human race, as this pretended piety  
“ has done; and with such barbarous cruelty, as if  
“ the only way to honour Heaven were to turn the  
“ present world into hell.

“ *Thor.* Truth is truth, though from an enemy,  
“ and spoken in malice. You bloody, blind, and  
“ superstitious bigots, how will you answer this?

“ *Mill.* What are your laws, of which you make  
your boast, but the fool’s wisdom, and the coward’s  
valour, the instrument and screen of all your vil-  
lanies? By them you punish in others what you act  
yourselves, or would have acted, had you been in  
their circumstances. The judge, who condemns the  
poor man for being a thief, had been a thief himself  
had he been poor. Thus you go on, deceiving and  
being deceived, harassing, plaguing, and destroying  
one another. But women are your universal prey.

*Women, by whom you are, the source of joy,  
With cruel arts you labour to destroy:*

*A thousand ways our ruin you pursue,  
Yet blame in us those arts first taught by you.  
Oh, may from hence each violated maid,  
By flattering, faithless, barb'rous man betray'd,  
When robb'd of innocence, and virgin fame,  
From your destruction raise a nobler name,  
T' avenge their sex's wrongs devote their mind,  
And future Millwoods prove to plague mankind.*

[*Exeunt.*]

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ACT V. " SCENE I.

" *A Room in a Prison. Enter THOROWGOOD,  
BLUNT, and LUCY.*

" *Thorowgood.* I HAVE recommended to Barnwell  
" a reverend divine, whose judgment and integrity I  
" am well acquainted with. Nor has Millwood been  
" neglected; but she, unhappy woman, still obsti-  
" nate, refuses his assistance.

" *Lucy.* This pious charity to the afflicted well be-  
" comes your character; yet pardon me, sir, if I  
" wonder you were not at their trial.

" *Thor.* I knew it was impossible to save him; and  
" I and my family bear so great a part in his distress,  
" that to have been present would but have aggra-  
" vated our sorrows without relieving his.

" *Blunt.* It was mournful indeed. Barnwell's  
" youth and modest deportment, as he passed, drew  
" tears from every eye. When placed at the bar,  
" and arraigned before the reverend judges, with  
" many tears and interrupting sobs, he confessed  
" and aggravated his offences, without accusing, or  
" once reflecting on Millwood, the shameless author  
" of his ruin. But she, dauntless and unconcerned,  
" stood by his side, viewing with visible pride and  
" contempt the vast assembly, who all, with sympa-  
" thizing sorrow, wept for the wretched youth.  
" Millwood, when called upon to answer, loudly in-  
" sisted upon her innocence, and made an artful and  
" a bold defence; but finding all in vain, the impar-

“ trial jury and the learned bench concurring to find  
“ her guilty, how did she curse herself, poor Barn-  
“ well, us, her judges, all mankind. But what  
“ could that avail? She was condemned, and is this  
“ day to suffer with him.

“ *Thor.* The time draws on. I am going to visit  
“ Barnwell, as you are Millwood.

“ *Lucy.* We have not wronged her, yet I dread  
“ this interview. She’s proud, impatient, wrathful,  
“ and unforgiving. To be the branded instruments  
“ of vengeance, to suffer in her shame, and sympa-  
“ thize with her in all she suffers, is the tribute we  
“ must pay for our former ill-spent lives, and long  
“ confederacy with her in wickedness.

“ *Thor.* Happy for you it ended when it did.  
“ What you have done against Millwood I know  
“ proceeded from a just abhorrence of her crimes,  
“ free from interest, malice, or revenge. Proselytes  
“ to virtue should be encouraged; pursue your pro-  
“ posed reformation, and know me hereafter for your  
“ friend.

“ *Lucy.* This is a blessing as unhopèd for as un-  
“ merited. But Heaven, that snatched us from im-  
“ pending ruin, sure intends you as its instrument  
“ to secure us from apostacy.

“ *Thor.* With gratitude to impute your deliverance  
“ to Heaven is just. Many less virtuously disposed  
“ than Barnwell was, have never fallen in the man-  
“ ner he has done. May not such owe their safety  
“ rather to Providence than to themselves? With  
“ pity and compassion let us judge him. Great  
“ were his faults, but strong was the temptation.  
“ Let his ruin teach us diffidence, humanity, and  
“ circumspection: for if we, who wonder at his fate,  
“ had like him been tried, like him perhaps we had  
“ fallen.”

[*Exeunt.*]

## SCENE II.

*A Dungeon, a Table, and a Lamp. BARNWELL  
reading. Enter THOROWGOOD at a distance.*

*Thor.* There see the bitter fruits of passion’s dé-

tested reign and sensual appetite indulged; severe reflections, penitence, and tears.

*Barn.* My honoured injured master, whose goodness has covered me a thousand times with shame, forgive this last unwilling disrespect. Indeed I saw you not.

*Thor.* 'Tis well; I hope you are better employed in viewing of yourself; "your journey's long, your  
" time for preparation almost spent." I sent a reverend divine to teach you to improve it, and should be glad to hear of his success.

*Barn.* The word of truth, which he recommended for my constant companion in this my sad retirement, has at length removed the doubts I laboured under. From thence I've learned the infinite extent of heavenly mercy; that my offences, though great, are not unpardonable; and that 'tis not my interest only, but my duty, to believe and to rejoice in my hope. So shall Heaven receive the glory, and future penitents the profit of my example.

*Thor.* Proceed.

*Barn.* 'Tis wonderful that words should charm despair, speak peace and pardon to a murderer's conscience; but truth and mercy flow in every sentence, attended with force and energy divine. How shall I describe my present state of mind? I hope in doubt, and trembling I rejoice; I feel my grief increase, even as my fears give way. Joy and gratitude now supply more tears than the horror and anguish of despair before.

*Thor.* These are the genuine signs of true repentance; the only preparatory, the certain way to everlasting peace. "Oh, the joy it gives to see a soul  
" formed and prepared for Heaven! For this the  
" faithful minister devotes himself to meditation,  
" abstinence, and prayer, shunning the vain delights  
" of sensual joys, and daily dies, that others may live  
" for ever. For this he turns the sacred volumes  
" o'er, and spends his life in painful search of truth.  
" The love of riches and the lust of power, he looks



“ upon with just contempt and detestation ; he only  
“ counts for wealth the souls he wins, and his high-  
“ est ambition is to serve mankind. If the reward  
“ of all his pains be to preserve one soul from wan-  
“ dering, or turn one from the error of his ways,  
“ how does he then rejoice, and own his little labours  
“ overpaid.”

*Barn.* What do I owe for all your generous kindness? But though I cannot, Heaven can and will reward you.

*Thor.* To see thee thus, is joy too great for words. Farewell.—Heaven strengthen thee:—Farewell.

*Barn.* Oh, sir, there's something I would say, if my sad swelling heart would give me leave.

*Thor.* Give it vent awhile, and try.

*Barn.* I had a friend—'tis true, I am unworthy—yet methinks your generous example might persuade——Could not I see him once, before I go from whence there's no return?

*Thor.* He's coming, and as much thy friend as ever. I will not anticipate his sorrow ; too soon he'll see the sad effect of this contagious ruin. This torrent of domestic misery bears too hard upon me. I must retire to indulge a weakness I find impossible to overcome. [*Aside.*] Much loved—and much lamented youth!—Farewell.—Heaven strengthen thee.——Eternally farewell.

*Barn.* The best of masters and of men—Farewell. While I live let me not want your prayers.

*Thor.* Thou shalt not. Thy peace being made with Heaven, death is already vanquished. Bear a little longer the pains that attend this transitory life, and cease from pain for ever. [*Exit Thorowgood.*]

*Barn.* Perhaps I shall. I find a power within, that bears my soul above the fears of death, and, spite of conscious shame and guilt, gives me a taste of pleasure more than mortal,

*Enter TRUEMAN and Keeper.*

*Keep.* Sir, there's the prisoner. [*Exit Keeper.*]



*Barn.* Trueman!—My friend, whom I so wished to see, yet now he's here, I dare not look upon him.  
[Weeps.]

*True.* Oh, Barnwell! Barnwell!

*Barn.* Mercy! Mercy! gracious Heaven! For death, but not for this, I was prepared.

*True.* What have I suffer'd since I saw thee last! What pain has absence given me!—But, oh, to see thee thus!—

*Barn.* I know it is dreadful! I feel the anguish of thy generous soul—But I was born to murder all who love me!  
[Both weep.]

*True.* I came not to reproach you; I thought to bring you comfort; but I'm deceiv'd, for I have none to give. I came to share thy sorrow, but cannot bear my own.

*Barn.* My sense of guilt indeed you cannot know; 'tis what the good and innocent, like you, can ne'er conceive: but other griefs at present I have none, but that I feel for you. In your sorrow I read you love me still; but yet, methinks, 'tis strange, when I consider what I am.

*True.* No more of that; I can remember nothing but thy virtues, thy honest, tender friendship, our former happy state, and present misery. Oh, had you trusted me when first the fair seducer tempted you, all might have been prevented.

*Barn.* Alas, thou knowest not what a wretch I've been. Breach of friendship was my first and least offence. So far was I lost to goodness, so devoted to the author of my ruin, that had she insisted on my murdering thee,—I think—I should have done it.

*True.* Pr'ythee, aggravate thy faults no more.

*Barn.* I think I should? Thus good and generous as you are, I should have murdered you!

*True.* We have not yet embraced, and may be interrupted. Come to my arms.

*Barn.* Never, never will I taste such joys on earth; never will I so soothe my just remorse. Are those honest arms and faithful bosom fit to embrace and

to support a murderer? These iron fetters only shall clasp, and flinty pavement bear me; [*Throwing himself on the ground.*] even those too good for such a bloody monster.

*True.* Shall fortune sever those whom friendship joined? Thy miseries cannot lay thee so low, but love will find thee. Here will we offer to stern calamity; this place the altar and ourselves the sacrifice. Our mutual groans shall echo to each other through the dreary vault; our sighs shall number the moments as they pass, and mingling tears communicate such anguish as words were never made to express.

*Barn.* Then be it so. [*Rising.*] Since you propose an intercourse of woe, pour all your griefs into my breast, and in exchange take mine. [*Embracing.*] Where's now the anguish that you promised? You've taken mine, and made me no return. Sure peace and comfort dwell within these arms, and sorrow can't approach me while I am here. "This too is the  
"work of Heaven; which having before spoke peace  
"and pardon to me, now sends thee to confirm it." Oh, take, take some of the joy that overflows my breast!

*True.* I do, I do. Almighty power! how hast thou made us capable to bear at once the extremes of pleasure and of pain.

*Enter Keeper.*

*Keeper.* Sir.

*True.* I come.

[*Exit Keeper.*]

*Barn.* Must you leave me? Death would soon have parted us for ever.

*True.* Oh, my Barnwell! there's yet another task behind. Again your heart must bleed for others' woes.

*Barn.* To meet and part with you I thought was all I had to do on earth. What is there more for me to do or suffer?

*True.* I dread to tell thee, yet it must be known!  
*Maria*——

*Barn.* Our master's fair and virtuous daughter?—

*True.* The same.

*Barn.* No misfortune, I hope, has reached that maid! Preserve her, Heaven, from every ill, to shew mankind that goodness is your care!

*True.* Thy, thy misfortunes, my unhappy friend, have reached her. Whatever you and I have felt, and more, if more be possible, she feels for you.

*Barn.* “ I know he doth abhor a lie, and would “ not trifle with his dying friend.” This is indeed the bitterness of death. *[Aside.*

*True.* You must remember (for we all observed it) for some time past, a heavy melancholy weighed her down. Disconsolate she seemed, and pined and languished from a cause unknown; till hearing of your dreadful fate, the long stifled flame blazed out; “ she wept, and wrung her hands, and tore her hair,” and in the transport of her grief discovered her own lost state, while she lamented yours.

*Barn.* “ Will all the pain I feel restore thy ease, “ lovely unhappy maid! *[Weeping.]*” Why did you not let me die, and never know it?

*True.* It was impossible. She makes no secret of her passion for you; she is determined to see you ere you die, and waits for me to introduce her.

*[Exit Trueman.*

*Barn.* Vain, busy thoughts, be still! What avails it to think on what I might have been! I now am—  
—what I have made myself.

*Enter TRUEMAN and MARIA.*

*True.* Madam, reluctant I lead you to this dismal scene. This is the seat of misery and guilt. Here awful justice reserves her public victims. This is the entrance to a shameful death.

*Mar.* To this sad place then, no improper guest, the abandoned lost Maria brings despair, and sees the subject and the cause of all this world of woe. Silent and motionless he stands, as if his soul had quitted her abode, and the lifeless form alone was left behind,

“ yet that so perfect, that beauty and death, ever at  
“ enmity, now seem united there.”

*Barn.* “ I groan, but murmur not.” Just Heaven! I am your own; do with me what you please.

*Mar.* Why are your streaming eyes still fix’d below, as though thou’dst give the greedy earth thy sorrows, and rob me of my due? Were happiness within your power you should bestow it where you pleased; but in your misery I must and will partake.

*Barn.* Oh, say not so, but fly, abhor, and leave me to my fate! Consider what you are, “ how vast your  
“ fortune, and how bright your fame. Have pity on  
“ your youth, your beauty, and unequalled virtue;  
“ for which so many noble peers have sighed in  
“ vain.” Bless with your charms some honourable lord. “ Adorn with your beauty, and by your ex-  
“ ample improve, the English court, that justly  
“ claims such merit:” so shall I quickly be to you—as though I had never been.

*Mar.* When I forget you, I must be so indeed. Reason, choice, virtue, all forbid it. Let women, like Millwood, if there are more such women, smile in prosperity and in adversity forsake. Be it the pride of virtue to repair, or to partake, the ruin such have made.

*True.* Lovely, ill-fated maid! “ Was there ever  
“ such generous distress before? How must this  
“ pierce his grateful heart, and aggravate his woes!”

*Barn.* Ere I knew guilt or shame, when fortune smiled, and when my youthful hopes were at the highest; if then to have raised my thoughts to you, had been presumption in me never to have been pardoned, think how much beneath yourself you condescend to regard me now!

“ *Mar.* Let her blush, who proffering love, invades  
“ the freedom of your sex’s choice, and meanly sues  
“ in hopes of a return. Your inevitable fate hath  
“ rendered hope impossible as vain. Then why  
“ should I fear to avow a passion so just and so dis-  
“ interested?

“ *True.* If any should take occasion from Mill-wood’s crimes to libel the best and fairest part of the creation, here let them see their error. The most distant hopes of such a tender passion from so bright a maid, might add to the happiness of the most happy, and make the greatest proud: yet here ’tis lavished in vain. Though by the rich present the generous donor is undone, he on whom it is bestowed receives no benefit.

“ *Barn.* So the aromatic spices of the east, which all the living covet and esteem, are with unavailing kindness wasted on the dead.”

*Mar.* Yes, fruitless is my love, and unavailing all my sighs and tears. Can they save thee from approaching death?—from such a death?—*Oh, sorrow insupportable!*——“ Oh, terrible idea? What is her misery and distress, who sees the first, last object of her love, for whom alone she’d live, for whom she’d die a thousand thousand deaths, if it were possible, expiring in her arms! Yet she is happy when compared to me. Were millions of worlds mine, I’d gladly give them in exchange for her condition. The most consummate woe is light to mine. The last of curses to other miserable maids, is all I ask for my relief, and that’s denied me.

“ *True.* Time and reflection cure all ills.

“ *Mar.* All but this. His dreadful catastrophe virtue herself abhors. To give a holiday to suburb slaves, and passing entertain the savage herd, who elbowing each other for a sight, pursue and press upon him like his fate!——A mind with piety and resolution armed may smile on death:——But public ignominy, everlasting shame, shame the death of souls, to die a thousand times, and yet survive even death itself in never-dying infamy—Is this to be endured?——Can I who live in him, and must each hour of my devoted life feel all these woes renewed——Can I endure this?

“ *True.* Grief has so impaired her spirits, she pants as in the agonies of death.”



Barn. Preserve her, Heaven, and restore her peace, nor let her death be added to my crimes. [*Bell tolls.*] I am summoned to my fate.

*Enter Keeper.*

Keep. Sir, the officers attend you. Millwood is already summoned.

Barn. Tell 'em, I'm ready. And now, my friend, farewell. [*Embracing.*] Support and comfort, the best you can, this mourning fair.—No more—Forget not to pray for me. [*Turning to Maria.*] Would you, bright excellence, permit me the honour of a chaste embrace, the last happiness this world could give were mine. [*She inclines towards him, they embrace.*] Exalted goodness! Oh, turn your eyes from earth and me to Heaven, where virtue, like yours, is ever heard! Pray for the peace of my departing soul. Early my race of wickedness began, and soon I reached the summit. “ Ere nature has finished her work, and stamped  
“ me man, just at the time when others begin to stray,  
“ my course is finished. Though short my span of  
“ life, and few my days; yet count my crimes for  
“ years, and I have lived whole ages.” Thus justice, in compassion to mankind, cuts off a wretch like me; by one such example to secure thousands from future ruin. “ Justice and mercy are in Heaven the same:  
“ its utmost severity is mercy to the whole; thereby  
“ to cure man's folly and presumption, which else  
“ would render even infinite mercy vain and ineffectual.”

*If any youth, like you, in future times,  
Shall mourn my fate, tho' he abhors my crimes;  
Or tender maid, like you, my tale shall hear,  
And to my sorrows give a pitying tear;  
To each such melting eye, and throbbing heart,  
Would gracious Heaven this benefit impart,  
Never to know my guilt, nor feel my pain,  
Then must you own you ought not to complain,  
Since you nor weep, nor shall I die in vain.*

[*Exeunt Barnwell, and Officers.*]



## “ SCENE III.

“ *The Place of Execution. The Gallows and Ladder*  
“ *at the farther End of the Stage. A Crowd of*  
“ *Spectators, BLUNT, and LUCY.*

“ *Lucy.* Heavens ! what a throng !

“ *Blunt.* How terrible is death when thus prepared !

“ *Lucy.* Support them, Heaven ! Thou only canst support them ; all other help is vain.

“ *Officer.* [*Within.*] Make way there ; make way, and give the prisoners room.

“ *Lucy.* They are here : observe them well. How humble and composed young Barnwell seems ! but Millwood looks wild, ruffled with passion, confounded and amazed.

“ *Enter BARNWELL, MILLWOOD, Officers, and Executioners.*

“ *Barn.* See, Millwood, see, our journey's at an end ! Life, like a tale that's told, is passed away. That short, but dark and unknown passage, death, is all the space between us and endless joys, or woes eternal.

“ *Mill.* Is this the end of all my flattering hopes ? Were youth and beauty given me for a curse, and wisdom only to ensure my ruin ? They were, they were. Heaven, thou hast done thy worst. Or, if thou hast in store some untried plague, somewhat that's worse than shame, despair, and death, unpitied death, confirmed despair, and soul confounding shame ; something that men and angels can't describe, and only fiends who bear it, can conceive ; now, pour it now, on this devoted head, that I may feel the worst thou canst inflict, and bid defiance to thy utmost power.

“ *Barn.* Yet ere we pass'd the dreadful gulf of death, yet ere you're plunged in everlasting woe, oh, bend your stubborn knees and harder heart, humbly to deprecate the wrath divine ! Who knows,

“ but Heaven, in your dying moments, may bestow  
“ that grace and mercy which your life despised ?

“ *Mill.* Why name you mercy to a wretch like  
“ me? Mercy is beyond my hope, almost beyond  
“ my wish. I can't repent, nor ask to be forgiven.

“ *Barn.* Oh, think what 'tis to be for ever, ever  
“ miserable, nor with vain pride oppose a power that  
“ is able to destroy you!

“ *Mill.* That will destroy me ; I feel it will. A  
“ deluge of wrath is pouring on my soul. Chains,  
“ darkness, wheels, racks, sharp-stinged scorpions,  
“ molten lead, and whole seas of sulphur, are light  
“ to what I feel.

“ *Barn.* Oh, add not to your vast account despair ;  
“ a sin more injurious to Heaven, than all you've yet  
“ committed.

“ *Mill.* Oh, I have sinned beyond the reach of  
“ mercy!

“ *Barn.* Oh, say not so ; 'tis blasphemy to think  
“ it. As yon bright roof is higher than the earth ;  
“ so, and much more, does Heaven's goodness pass  
“ our apprehension. Oh, what created being shall  
“ presume to circumscribe mercy that knows no  
“ bounds!

“ *Mill.* This yields no hope. Though pity may  
“ be boundless, yet 'tis free. I was doomed before  
“ the world began to endless pains, and thou to joys  
“ eternal.

“ *Barn.* Oh, gracious Heaven ! extend thy pity to  
“ her ; let thy rich mercy flow in plenteous streams  
“ to chase her fears, and heal her wounded soul.

“ *Mill.* It will not be : your prayers are lost in air,  
“ or else returned perhaps with double blessings to  
“ your bosom : they help not me.

“ *Barn.* Yet hear me, Millwood.

“ *Mill.* Away, I will not hear thee : I tell thee,  
“ youth, I am by Heaven devoted a dreadful instance  
“ of its power to punish. [*Barnwell seems to pray.*]  
“ If thou wilt pray, pray for thyself, not me. How  
“ doth his fervent soul mount with his words, and

“ both ascend to Heaven ! that Heaven, whose gates  
“ are shut with adamantine bars against my prayers,  
“ had I the will to pray. I cannot bear it. Sure  
“ ’tis the worst of torments to behold others enjoy  
“ that bliss which we must never taste.

“ *Officer.* The utmost limit of your time’s expired.

“ *Mill.* Encompassed with horror, whither must  
“ I go? I would not live—nor die——That I could  
“ cease to be—or ne’er had been !

“ *Barn.* Since peace and comfort are denied her  
“ here, may she find mercy where she least expects  
“ it, and this be all her hell ! From our example  
“ may all be taught to fly the first approach of vice ;  
“ but if o’ertaken,

“ *By strong temptation, weakness, or surprise,*

“ *Lament their guilt, and by repentance rise.*

“ *Th’ impenitent alone die unforgiven :*

“ *To sin’s like man, and to forgive like Heaven.*

“ *Enter* TRUEMAN.

“ *Lucy.* Heart-breaking sight !——Oh, wretched,  
“ wretched Millwood !

“ *True.* How is she disposed to meet her fate ?

“ *Blunt.* Who can describe unutterable woe ?

“ *Lucy.* She goes to death encompassed with hor-  
“ ror, loathing life, and yet afraid to die. No tongue  
“ can tell her anguish and despair.

“ *True.* Heaven be better to her than her fears.—  
“ May she prove a warning to others, a monument  
“ of mercy in herself.

“ *Lucy.* Oh, sorrow insupportable ! Break, break,  
“ my heart !”

*True.* In vain,

*With bleeding hearts, and weeping eyes we show,  
A humane, generous sense of others’ woe ;  
Unless we mark what drew their ruin on,  
And, by avoiding that—prevent our own.*

[Exeunt omnes.]

## EPILOGUE.

WRITTEN BY COLLEY CIBBER ESQ.

Spoken by MARIA.

*SINCE* fate has robb'd me of the hapless youth,  
For whom my heart had hoarded up its truth;  
By all the laws of love and honour, now,  
I'm free again to choose—and one of you.

*But soft—With caution first I'll round me peep:  
Maids, in my case, should look before they leap.  
Here's choice enough, of various sorts and huc,  
The cit, the wit, the rake cock'd up in cue,  
The fair spruce mercer, and the tawny Jew.*

*Suppose I search the sober gallery?—No;  
There's none but 'prentices, and cuckolds all-a-row;  
And these, I doubt, are those that make them so:*  
[Pointing to the Boxes.

*'Tis very well, enjoy the jest:—But you,  
Fine powder'd sparks,—nay, I am told 'tis true,—  
Your happy spouses—can make cuckolds too.  
'Twixt you and them the diff'rence this, perhaps:  
The cit's ashamed whene'er his duck he traps;  
But you, when Madam's tripping, let her fall,  
Cock up your hats, and take no shame at all.*

*What if some favour'd poet I could meet,  
Whose love would lay his laurels at my feet.  
No—Painted passion's real love abhors—  
His flame would prove the suit of creditors.*

*Not to detain you then with longer pause,  
In short, my heart to this conclusion draws;  
I yield it to the hand that's loudest in applause.*







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Cumberland, R.  
The British drama

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